

Kathryn Wasserman Davis Collaborative in Conflict Transformation

2023 Mid-Year Report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
LAYING THE FOUNDATION IN K-12 SCHOOLS	2
UNDERGRADUATE LIFE	4
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	6
GRADUATE TRAINING AND RESEARCH	9
GLOBAL LITERACY	11
FACULTY RESEARCH	14
CROSS-PILLAR INITIATIVES	15
APPENDIX: SAMPLE SURVEY DATA	18

This report was compiled in August 2023 by CT Collaborative director Sarah Stroup, in consultation with Erin Anderson (program manager) and Chuck Mason (director, grants and sponsored programs).

Please send questions about this report to conflicttransformation@middlebury.edu.

INTRODUCTION

Launched in March 2022, the Conflict Transformation (CT) Collaborative has completed our first full academic year (22-23). As of July 2023, we are in the middle of our second summer. Every six months, we assess and report on our efforts, sharing that information with our donors and partners. For a full narrative of the Collaborative and our efforts, please refer to our annual reports, available on our website (go.middlebury.edu/ctc).

The core goals of the Collaborative are: build a flexible model that establishes conflict transformation as a liberal art, work national and global networks of peacebuilders, and share our lessons and models within that network. We are building the foundations for that work.

Our leadership team is stable, collaborative, and productive. We have developed a shared vision of conflict transformation that engages with the broader field of practice while building on the strengths and concerns of the Middlebury community. CT requires certain knowledge, skills, and dispositions to support constructive engagement in conflict, and we have identified a handful of core approaches to ground our work. In terms of knowledge, critical self-awareness and contextual knowledge are essential to conflict analysis. We are expanding our practices in four skill areas: dialogue, intercultural competence, mediation, and restorative practices. Following Lederach (2005), we seek to cultivate four dispositions: creativity, curiosity, risk-taking, and a focus on relationships. This is a *flexible model of conflict transformation* that we have shared with our partners.

Alongside this shared vision, the CT pillar heads have established strong working relationships that facilitate program development and collective learning. This vision and collaboration is essential for integrating appropriate skills at all levels of the higher education curriculum.

In the early years of the Collaborative, we are bringing our CT work to our existing partnerships and exploring new network connections with others working in higher education, dialogue, mediation, creative practices, mindfulness, and restorative practices.

PILLAR ONE: LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION (HIGH SCHOOL) WITH TEACHERS ATTENDING THE BREAD LOAF SCHOOL OF ENGLISH (BLSE).

At Bread Loaf, we are building new courses, offering a summer workshop series, supporting the NextGen network, and offering fellowships for teachers. First, the Bread Loaf School of English (BLSE) expanded its conflict transformation curriculum, “Teaching, Writing, and Acting for Change,” from three to four courses in 2023. This summer’s Change courses have enrolled 28 K-12 teachers.

The two new courses are “Oral and Community Histories, Rhetorics, and Literacies,” taught by a BLSE faculty member from Spelman College, and “Disability Narratives in/as Conflict.” These complement new courses in our regular curriculum, which are not funded by the grant but directly seed our CT work (“Multimodal Pedagogy for Creativity and Inclusion” And “Documentaries, Social Justice, and Ethics”). These courses allow us to meet the following three outcome measures: developing strategies for managing classroom dynamics, adapting CT to humanities-based teaching and community action, and helping high school students understand and address conflict across differences (see 2022 report).

We opened this summer’s Change Curriculum workshops to our full BLSE community with a series of CT-related events. Three have been arranged in parallel with the CT summer programming at the College:

- “Tea and Talk” by Hillary Mullins, on interpersonal conflict and non-defensive communication
- “The Voices of St. Joseph’s Orphanage,” a multi-media exhibit presented by St. Joseph’s Orphanage Restorative Inquiry and The Vermont Folklife Center
- Workshop by Projects for Peace Alumni Award winner Joseph Kaifala during his July visit

In addition, we’re offering three additional Change-related events for the full community:

- A BLTN/Beyond the Page/Change curriculum workshop (funded by the CT grant), that builds on the Change curriculum and spotlights student work funded by a Change Action Grant
- A screening and discussion of James Sanchez’s film, *Man on Fire* (Sanchez’ newest documentary film was supported in our first round of research funding)
- Workshop on BLTN Oral History project, run by mentor from Atlanta BLTN Next Gen hub

Finally, we are well underway in planning for a BLSE Winter Institute (Feb. 16-18, 2024) on “Teaching, Writing, and Acting Across Difference.” This provides teachers an opportunity to expand their creative and critical strategies for engaging across difference. The Institute, to be held on the Middlebury Bread Loaf campus in Vermont, will be an extension of our Change curriculum and feature the core members of our Change faculty and our BLTN/BLSE administration. It will offer 10+ professional development credit hours for teachers. We are planning for a participant population of 50, and are marketing this pilot event to current BLSE students and alums as well as teachers in Vermont and the contiguous states.

Out of an eventual 10 Action Grants to BLTN NextGen youth and mentors, we have awarded three Action Grants so far for this year: (1) Susan Miera, BLTN alum, working with the Santa Fe NextGen site; (2) Rabiah Khalil Abdullah, BLTN and Change Fellowship alum in Maryland, and (3) Fallon Abel, BLTN alum at Sharon Academy in VT; formerly with “What’s the Story, Vermont?” We plan to undertake another round of awards in the fall.

Retreats: The “What’s the Story: The Young Filmmakers Social Action Team” (the Vermont BLTN Next Gen group) hosted the BLTN NextGen Youth Leadership Network retreat and film fest at Champlain College, featuring screenings and discussion of social action documentaries created by the Young Filmmakers team. Participants included youth and mentors from four different BLTN NextGen sites: Aiken, South Carolina; the Santa Fe Indian School in New Mexico; Louisville; Kentucky; and Vermont. The Aiken, SC BLTN NextGen group also had a retreat at Camp Long in South Carolina, with 29 BLTN NextGen Youth and 6 mentors/BLTN staff.

In 2022, we decided to reduce the number of awarded Change Fellowships in order to cover 100% tuition for teachers pursuing conflict transformation study at BLSE and related project work within BLTN. By covering all expenses for these Fellows, we reduced barriers to participation for students from less well-funded schools. This allowed us to increase the stipend for each and fully cover their graduate tuition and living expenses at BLSE for our Change Fellows, providing critical access for teachers from communities with limited professional development opportunities. We made this change mindfully in this first year given the relative timing of the grant award and our admissions process. Going forward, we will continue to uphold access as a priority and explore how resources can be allocated accordingly. As mentioned in our previous report, we have increased the number of fellowships awarded this year from seven to twelve.

PILLAR TWO: CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION IN UNDERGRADUATE LIFE

Our focus this year is building the capacity to deliver programming. This will allow us to expand offerings in Restorative Practices for the majority of incoming students, develop courses on productive engagement with conflict and methods of intervention, provide practice opportunities and skill-building within student life, and expand robust professional development (especially via Middlebury's Engaged Listening protocol) for faculty and professional staff who mentor students.

We are piloting a substantial number of training opportunities in curricular and co-curricular spaces. The focus in 2022-23 was on launching new course offerings that could both stand alone and support and inform co-curricular student opportunities. In January 2023, we taught the first version of a "conflict transformation skills" course (INTD 1259). The 62 students met collectively and individually in sections led by three instructors (CT director Sarah Stroup, philosophy professor Steve Viner, and international mediator Julian Portilla). A half-dozen global and national CT leaders gave guest lectures and workshops to the class for learning and skill-building. In Spring 2023, President Patton and director Stroup co-taught a revised version of this course to 18 students, experimenting with new content that focused on interdisciplinary conflict analysis.

We are also expanding training for students outside the classroom. We piloted three new initiatives in the first half of this year. In Spring 2023, twenty (20) students signed up for a weekend workshop with the Sustained Dialogue Institute. The training was requested by our long-standing peer-led campus dialogue group, JusTalks, and supported by staff member Crystal Jones. We are working with residential life deans on a "Restorative Practices curriculum" for the first year that aligns with important milestones or moments. The goal is to develop community building and reflective prompts for circles to be held in first-year residences next fall. Finally, we hosted a workshop for college students and community members in April that focused on the film "Listen Courageously." Filmmaker and facilitators joined a dinner and dialogue workshop after seeing a documentary that profiled discussions of abortion, immigration, and gun control in the United States.

The content from the CT Skills course is being integrated into many existing programs that support experiential learning (see Pillar 3 discussion below). In February 2023, we convened twenty-four faculty and staff to reflect on the CT Skills course and discuss ways to integrate the content into existing training for students. CT skill-building is being integrated into INTD 121 (a course that supports students working in community partnerships), the Poverty and Privilege cluster, the History in Translation Program, and the Experiential Learning Hub (an online platform supporting a wide variety of co-curricular student experiences).

We continue to build student engagement into the work we are expanding on campus. Three undergraduate interns worked with Beyond the Page Faculty Artists in classrooms and workshops – learning various teaching practices that can shift how we learn together in academic spaces. These interns created an event/installation that engaged around 200 students across the Middlebury community. Using the pedagogical practices learned during the academic year, BtP interns guided participants through a series of story-telling prompts, drawing, and movement that invited students across the Middlebury community to embrace their creativity and connect with one another.

We began our professional development programming for faculty and staff in 2023. In Spring 2023, two faculty facilitators led two separate cohorts of 13 participants in the *Engaged Listening Project* program. We also built our new cohorts for the Fall with four facilitators. We have received 22 new applications, which is quite promising for the program. Our finalized cohorts for the Fall have 18 participants, as we lost four applicants to scheduling conflicts. We will include these four applicants in our Spring cohort.

Throughout Spring 2023, we hosted 10 lunch seminars on a range of CT-themed topics, with faculty and staff invited to discuss a reading or subject with a guest speaker. 43 individuals attended at least one seminar meeting this past semester. We intend to replicate this format at MIIS next fall.

In the winter and spring semesters, 8 faculty collaborated with Beyond the Page (BtP) Faculty artists in their classrooms. This reached 150 students in 13 class sessions, where BtP used theater tools to invite students' identities and experiences into the room and foster conversation across difference. Through theater and arts practices, these classes tried to build creative capacities for addressing complex problems and addressed other issues such as reaching across differences and empathize with the human beings involved in this political/systemic conflict, what female agency looks like in our world today, and questions of sexual identity, agency and how community can support those identities.

Our ELP cohorts also partook in a workshop with Beyond the Page artists who used theatre tools of storytelling and movement to invite faculty and staff to examine their inherent creative skills and how those unlock personal understanding, build connections and are vital in facilitating difficult conversations.

In early June we held a Restorative Practices training for faculty and staff. 35 participants spent three days engaging with RP as a framework for community building with intentionality towards inclusivity and developing skills responding to harms that inevitably occur in community. The training was a success, and we will build on that momentum with trainings for skill building this fall.

We also planned a major continuing education opportunity with our Center for Teaching Learning and Research (CTLR) for Summer. We will hold a plenary session in Middlebury's annual Writing and Teaching Retreat in August 2023. We will workshop main pedagogical principles of Conflict Transformation with (estimated) 30 faculty participants.

This past spring, the CT Collaborative has newly engaged with higher education and peace-related associations (see the Pillar 5 section for details about outreach within Middlebury's global network.) In March 2023, we supported an in-person Asset Mapping Session on Building Democratic Citizens at Middlebury, led by staff from the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. Sixteen persons - staff, students, faculty, and administrators attended a three-hour workshop, including President Patton, CT director Stroup, and all CT Pillar Leads.

We have joined a Citizen Preparation Measurement working group, led by the Institute for Citizens and Scholars and Claremont McKenna College. Middlebury was represented in May 2023 at the inaugural meeting by Khuram Hussain (VP for DEI) and Kristie Skor (coordinator for Democracy Initiatives).

We have continued connecting to other colleagues in higher education, exchanging program information and exploring determinants of successful projects. This spring, CT director Stroup has met with Jon Shields (political science professor at Claremont McKenna College and *New York Times* editorial writer) and Lara Schwartz (director of the Project on Civil Discourse at American University). Beyond the six guest speakers in winter term, we hosted talks by two scholar-practitioners: Peter Dixon '01.5 (Brandeis University) and James Lee (Notre Dame PhD, Oberlin College).

PILLAR THREE: 3. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CT (UNDERGRADUATE)

In experiential learning, we are supporting community engagement opportunities, hosting new convenings, supporting a new Projects for Peace alumni award, and sponsoring internships and experiences.

Community engagement opportunities: First, we helped fund another cohort of 15 local Privilege & Poverty (P&P) Internships, building on prior support. The Privilege & Poverty Academic Cluster integrates coursework with experiential learning to critically examine the causes and consequences of economic inequality. In each of these areas, students navigate conflict and utilize conflict transformation skills. This spring, we added a half-credit course taught by a Center for Community Engagement Assistant Director to prepare the cohort of the summer interns. In this course, the students learned from practitioners about the complexities of antipoverty work in community and trauma-informed practice, worked to understand their own contexts, perspectives and work styles, set learning goals for themselves and their cohort, and built skills in reflective practice. They will have a course in the fall (offering this for a second time) to reflect on the skills and knowledge they built.

Second, we supported five Middlebury College Alternative Break Programs (MAlt) in February 2023, with a total of 62 student participants. MAlt's goal is to engage Middlebury students with communities across the nation and the globe to share an experience, provide service where service is needed, and learn about the systems that shape community realities around the world. Trips are developed and led by student leaders with support from staff. Through the experience students have made connections to Conflict Transformation in several ways: using restorative practices with their community partners to actively engage with systematic and historic racism in community health projects, and engaging in active listening to support asylum seekers through their application processes. The themes of listening and dialogue were a hallmark across trips-- with community partners, within cohorts, and within individuals.

Third, we are funding three undergraduate participants in the Middlebury Social Impact Corps (MSIC) program. MSIC is a partnership-based program that connects students to social change through unique experiential learning opportunities. A select cohort of Middlebury College (Interns) and M.I.S. graduate students (Scholars) are matched with a community partner focused on impact within a local/regional context. Through partnership, MSIC members gain knowledge, skills, and dispositions for purposeful careers in social impact. The summer 2023 cohort will be working with community partner, Big Sur Land Trust, to create a story map depicting the rich history and many uses of Marks Ranch using GIS.

Fourth, we supported a Social Entrepreneurship Fellow's project. An Innovation Hub-affiliated student learned about and explored ways to address global health disparities, and was able to expand on his implementation of a collaborative telehealth project in a rural hospital in Kenya to two additional clinics. After three years of working as the connector between health systems, Hieu learned how to facilitate intercultural conflicts and function within complex global systems and power hierarchies.

Finally, we supported a number of special projects that arose throughout the year. These included:

- an Environmental Studies class worked with a team of local artists to research and develop an interactive, immersive art space to address community health and collaborative healing processes.
- Two students joined a national convening of diverse youth to discuss what it means to aspire to fulfill the American Dream in today's polarized context. The group is organized by the descendants of the Go For Broke division of the US military - Japanese Americans who fought for the US in WWII while their families were incarcerated.
- Honoring an alumna with a Public Service Leadership Award, to share her story with current students about the paths they can take in Conflict Transformation after graduation. Our honoree

has used research, media, and advocacy to shape foreign aid assistance and policymaking to better address the needs and rights of civilians affected by conflict and disasters. She currently works to address the systemic change required to prevent and end conflict.

In Summer 2023, we coordinated a hybrid Convening to bring together participants from over 15 Conflict Transformation-funded programs and 100+ institutions (total of 280 invited students) to deepen their understanding and practice of CT. In July, we gathered diverse stakeholders who are engaging with CT through experiential learning to deepen our understanding of CT as a framework for relationship building and social change; build connections and share learning among students, educators, and community partners; and explore mindfulness as a skill for connecting across difference and transforming society.

The Projects for Peace Alumni Award winner Joseph Kaifala and mindfulness scholar Beth Berila hosted two educational sessions remotely to include our global audiences. Please see more information at [Summer Convening on Experiential Learning and Conflict Transformation | Middlebury](#).

In October we launched the [Projects for Peace Alumni Award](#) across the Projects for Peace network. We distributed application materials to 100+ eligible institutions and via social media. The announcement yielded an enthusiastic response, leading to outreach to staff from partner institutions and alumni. Projects for Peace staff worked with CT Collaborative staff to design the award, prepare guidance and respond to queries from alumni and campus contacts. Each partner institution was invited to nominate no more than one applicant for consideration. This spring we reviewed 69 nominations, interviewed five finalists, and made a final decision. President Patton's office [announced the winner, Joseph Kaifaila](#). Mr. Kaifala is a graduate of Skidmore College and member of the inaugural group of Projects for Peace grantees.

We have also sponsored many break programs. In the past six months, three major programs have engaged a total of 30 participants:

Law Advocacy and Conflict Transformation Trek to New York City: The Center for Careers and Internships organized a fully funded trip to New York City over spring break 2023. The objective was to expose students to real-world professional experiences that will inform their career exploration and other post-graduate planning. Topics we explored on the conflict transformation theme included human rights, free speech, mediation, immigration, voting rights, civil rights, and housing. 12 students and 2 staff visited with 19 people including 11 alumni from 10 organizations: (1) National Center for Law and Economic Justice, (2) Center for Creative Conflict Resolution, (3) US Attorney's Office Southern District, (4) Federal Defenders Office, (5) Manhattan District Attorney Office, (6) NYC Council and Mayor's Office, (7) Red Hook Community Justice Center, (8) Tenement Museum, (9) Restorative Justice Initiative at CUNY Law School, and (10) Bronx Legal Services.

Here are two quotes from student participants that reflect the impact of the experience:

- "One of the themes that stood out to me on this trip was human connection. Law and advocacy should focus on human stories and personal connections to be successful. Conflicts are also best resolved through these lenses, so making this connection helped me realize the importance of law and advocacy in conflict resolution."
- "I've always known I wanted to pursue a career in restorative justice, but I never really knew how to proceed with doing so. I've always been sure that I'd never go to law school, and ... this has caused some anxiety knowing that many in this field are expected to go to law school. After this Trek and meeting those in this field who didn't go to law school reassured me that I can become established in this career too."

History in Translation 2023: Each summer, the History in Translation (HT) program brings students from diverse linguistic, cultural, and educational contexts together as a purposefully intercultural cohort

to explore an historical experience or event in service of present-day social justice - and the vision of an equitable and inclusive future. The 2023 History in Translation (HT23) focus was language reclamation and revitalization; and a centering and exchange of Indigenous, First Nation, Native, American Indian, and Māori language, history and culture. The program was a collaboration between the Center for Community Engagement, the Middlebury School of Abenaki, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Māori Office, University of Waikato. Participants included four staff and students of the School of Abenaki, two Middlebury undergraduates, and four teaching fellows and one faculty member from the University of Waikato Māori Office. The primary program coordinator was a MIIS International Education Management student, supervised by CCE staff.

Some participants from the HT22 program will be continuing their work this summer. Six students (3 Middlebury undergraduates and 3 International Christian University undergraduates) will gather to translate materials (Japanese to English) held by the University of Utah archives. They will continue to explore the perspectives of Japanese Americans living under Executive Order 9066 and the lessons to be found in this tragic example of state-sanctioned oppression; and to make this history more accessible to diverse language communities. Kenzo Okazaki (Midd '21), who founded the Service Translation project as an undergraduate, will be joining the group and is the primary liaison with the University.

Finally, we funded 22 domestic and international summer internships related to conflict transformation and supported by the Center for Careers and Internships: two cohorts (diiVe, Team for Tech) and the three individual ones. CT funds supported 19 internships for students working in nations rebuilding after generations of war and conflict. This includes 13 student internships with [diiVe](#), an organization based in South Africa that provides students with consulting projects in the shared value, sustainability and strategy space. They work with clients in the public and private sector. diiVe implemented a conflict transformation curricula for all of its interns to learn how essential conflict can be for creating change, and the skills needed to embrace that potential.

Conflict Transformation funds also enabled 6 students to travel to Uganda with [Team4Tech](#), a Silicon Valley-Based nonprofit that helps education-focused NGOs in the developing world. Students are working to devise and deliver solutions for two partners, African SOUP and SOUL Foundation, which operate education and community development programs in rural Eastern Uganda. Among other things, interns will be providing digital literacy classes, offering women's health and vocational education programs, and engaging in intercultural communication.

Conflict Transformation funds also funded three students participating in individual internships in international development, international education, and the environment. These internships include working for the United Nations in the Middle Eastern Unit's Office for Disarmament Affairs; developing Conflict Transformation tools, partnerships, and curricula for the Middlebury School in France; and policy research and communications work for the Institute of Climate and Peace.

We also helped create internships for students from multiple institutions with the Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty, focused on the causes and consequences of economic inequality. SHECP is focused on two main initiatives for this initial year – launching a new Policy and Nonprofit Leadership (PNPL) Internship and the development and implementation of a CT curriculum for all incoming students (including four Middlebury College interns in national internship placements).

To develop the CT curriculum, SHECP is working with Katy Gray Brown, professor of philosophy and director of the Peace Studies Institute and Program in Conflict Resolution at Manchester University. We piloted the curriculum with interns in the Shamokin, PA and Richmond, VA cohorts. The students completed an asynchronous training in late May and then a 75 minute workshop with Dr. Gray Brown.

PILLAR FOUR: GRADUATE TRAINING AND RESEARCH IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION (GRADUATE)

Deliverable #1: Middlebury will create a Conflict Transformation Fellows program that will provide a nexus for distinct graduate research, pedagogies, curriculum, networks, and outreach programs to come together into a critical, reflective, interdisciplinary, community, and partnership-focused approach to conflict transformation.

We have developed a vision for our *interdisciplinary conflict transformation approaches* to address complex social problems, outlined in full in the annual report. This vision informs the work of three types of Conflict Transformation Graduate Fellows: Cohort Fellows, Graduate Assistant Fellows, and Pedagogy Fellows.

From 130 applications, we selected 44 Cohort Fellows for the 2022-2023 academic year. This included both continuing and incoming students who received \$10,000 scholarships (per academic year, based on full time enrollment). In Spring 2023, we received 21 applications and selected 4 additional Fellows (2 of these will begin in Fall 2023). The fellowships involve monthly meetings facilitated by Pillar 4 lead Dr. Netta Avineri, peer-to-peer mentorship, learning with guest speakers, and deep engagement in an interdisciplinary project. Through the Spring 2023 semester, the students worked with peers and guest speakers to refine their projects, and then presented their work at our first Annual Seminar. A select group of these Cohort Fellows will serve as mentors for the next year's cohort.

The inaugural [Annual Seminar](#) for Cohort Fellows was held in May 2023, with an estimated 75-100 participants in attendance (both in-person and online). The seminar included multiple panels of faculty, students, and staff sharing their experiences with Conflict Transformation projects from throughout the year. Some examples of student projects include "Ethics of Interrogation: Changing the Way the US Government Investigates Terrorism and Talking with Ex-Law Enforcement" (Cascade Kirst, NPTS); "Transformational Community Work in Costa Rica" (Elisabeth Speece); "Coalition of Homeless Service Providers: Evaluation" (Tessa Yumbe, Galen Gibian, Chia Aygoda); and "Rethinking Police Presence & Visible Power" (Martin Juarez Manzano, MPA/IPD).

We received 93 applications for the 2023-2024 Cohort Fellows. Final determinations are underway and will be announced in mid/late July.

In Spring 2023, we funded 21 Graduate Assistant (GA) Fellows working on projects affiliated with Centers and other initiatives. The projects are as follows, with the number of fellows in parentheses:

- at the Center for Terrorism, Extremism, and Counterterrorism, projects on the Wagner Group (4), Diverting Hate (2), and Russian-related research (1)
- at the Center for the Blue Economy; a project on Shark/Human Interactions (2)
- at the MetaLab, Coalition of Homeless Service Providers Community-Based Research (4), Housing Pain Index (4)
- in the Social Sciences Research Modules (1)
- in Immersive Learning, working on CT, Intercultural Competence, & Experiential Learning (2)
- at the Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Critical Issues Forum (1)

We also created a structure for Pedagogy Fellows who are supporting the work of the CT Collaborative. This spring, we have sponsored 6 Pedagogy Fellows: 2 supporting work at the Bread Loaf School of English in Monterey; 1 for Beyond the Page; and 3 supporting the CT Fellowship and Seminar.

In addition to these fellows, we have supported graduate students in other CT-connected work.

- \$75,000 to Middlebury Language Schools to support 18 graduate students pursuing CT projects

- With Pillar 2, we are supporting the [Middlebury Social Impact Corps](#) (see description above). The 2023 program will run in late summer, with Pillar 4 Lead Netta Avineri as faculty director.
- We hosted assorted guest speakers and events; as a highlight, storyteller and photographer [Matika Wilbur](#) discussed her work on narratives and identities of contemporary Native peoples.

In the first half of 2023, we supported 27 students across immersive learning excursions, internships, and practicum. This includes 12 students in a faculty-led excursion to Costa Rica, and 8 to Colombia; 5 who participated in international internships; and 2 in international practica.

The excursion to Costa Rica was led by MIIS professors Sabino Morera and Marie Butcher in collaboration with the Executive Center at the University of Peace in Costa Rica. Entitled “Partnerships for Peace,” this immersive learning experience engaged with the themes of peace and security, sustainability, language skills, intercultural communication, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Participants visited organizations working on sustainable development, social justice, mitigating effects of climate change, while having an immersive intercultural experience in both Spanish and English.

The group that went to Libano, Colombia with MIIS professor Lyuba Zarsky learned about methods of collaboration between farmers and NGOs to promote sustainable development; the importance of regenerative agriculture’s intersection with Colombia’s post-conflict peacebuilding efforts; and the challenges and opportunities for small-scale farmers to engage with global supply chains.

Finally, this has been an amazing year of growth for the Critical Issues Forum (CIF) project. CIF aims to promote disarmament and nonproliferation education among high school students around the world. CIF also aims to help students to grow into individuals who can contribute to peace and security, disarmament and nonproliferation, and other social justice issues.

Our first major event of the year was a February visit from esteemed professor and historian, Dr. Vincent Intondi, with 60 attendees. This event was an exciting collaboration with CNS and the Student Council Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee at MIIS. His lecture, “Intersections of Racial Justice and Nuclear Disarmament,” encapsulated a major focus of CIF, which is emphasizing intersectionality to broaden the discussion of nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation. The event report can be found [here](#).

On April 15th was our CIF Spring Conference, which included 100 participants. The 11 participating schools produced impressive projects to showcase for the conference, which included over 120 students and teachers. The theme of the conference this year was “Bringing Intersectional Approaches to Youth Education for Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation.”

We designed the conference to encourage intercultural exchange. We constructed diverse small groups so that the Japanese and American students could interact. Keynote speaker Dr. Togzhan Kassenova’s moving lecture, *The Continued Legacy of Soviet Nuclear Tests in Kazakhstan*, revealed the detrimental effects of nuclear testing on the people of that country. This year, CIF welcomed three US high schools, one of which is [Julia R. Masterman Laboratory and Demonstration School](#). The CIF project at this school is led by a BLTN teacher. For more information about the Spring Conference, please read the report [here](#).

In May, we invited Monterey High School Students to CNS in person, where they learned from experts about nonproliferation, disarmament and open-source intelligence. The 20 participants experienced VR and watched the immersive VR documentary, *On the Morning You Wake (To the End of the World)*. We are currently working toward the Summer Students Conference. Non-local American students will stay in the Munras House, while Japanese students will be provided with homestays for an immersive cultural experience. The summer conference will encourage participating students to discuss nuclear disarmament, present their solutions, engage in a cultural exchange with local students, and work in small groups.

PILLAR FIVE: GLOBAL LITERACY AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION (ALL LEVELS)

In Pillar 5, we are supporting globally oriented Conflict Transformation work throughout the institution, including Middlebury College, the Middlebury-C.V. Starr Schools Abroad, the Institute at Monterey, and the School of the Environment. Collectively, these programs serve Middlebury undergraduate and graduate students as well as students from other US colleges and universities. Conflict transformation experiences across these units vary as a function of student interests and available local resources and opportunities. We have offered internships, independent study, research experiences, short-term student and faculty exchanges, expert talks and panels, academic excursions, and content courses - all incorporating conflict transformation as an integral analytic and explanatory device. In this second year, we have made significant progress in expanding the number and variety of activities.

Middlebury School in Argentina: conflict transformation is a theme that is being integrated across the curriculum. For example, Professor Evangelista's writing course revolves entirely around CT, with CT-focused readings and reflection prompts. Some students have taken on additional CT-focused opportunities. One student is currently participating in a credit-bearing semester-long internship at the Fundación Luisa Hairabedian, a local NGO focused on studying human rights violations and state terrorism. The work includes, among other things: preparing the final presentation of the foundation's educational program reaching over 250 students; and supporting performances in public places as part of the day of remembrance of the victims of Argentina's military dictatorship. Another student enrolled in an independent research course with Professor Liria Evangelista. The goal was a comparative analysis of policies geared to preserve, understand, and disseminate memories of human rights violations and state terrorism during the dictatorships in both countries.

Middlebury Schools in Argentina and Uruguay: As part of their required Culture and Writing courses, students from Buenos Aires and Montevideo spent three days at the "Minas y Abril" festival, which has taken place in the Uruguayan city of Minas for the past 28 years. The festival was originally created as a celebration of traditional rural culture focusing on gaucho folkloric music and culture. During the past decade the festival has grown to incorporate performances by an increasingly wide variety of national and regional artists, offering a broad representation of the rich variety of national subcultures. This has not come without conflict among festival organizers and with national audiences. As a conflict transformation activity, our students explored the tensions related to the idea of national representation with different audiences at the festival. They also conducted an exclusive interview with the successors of the founders of the festival.

Middlebury School in Brazil, the Rohatyn Center for Global Affairs (RCGA), the Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), and the Middlebury Office of Sustainability and Integration: Five Middlebury students (Rohatyn Global Scholars) and five UFF students participated in an educational exchange this spring. The program focused on conflict transformation in the context of climate change, inequality, and sustainability. The goals were to promote intercultural communication, language learning, community engagement, global literacy, and the development of CT skills. In Brazil, students visited the Barco Scola (Boat School project), a program on environmental lessons for local community youth working with the UFF's Water Resources and Environmental Engineering Department. They also visited non-profits: the Institute of Global South Immigrant Women and Ama Darcy. In Middlebury, the students participated in a conflict transformation skills session, visited a Portuguese language class, explored Middlebury's sustainability infrastructure, and learned about UN Regional Centers of Expertise.

Middlebury School in Cameroon

Research project: Two students (Tufts University, Wesleyan University) participated in a research project supervised by Professor Erick Fofack exploring the socioeconomic integration of internally displaced persons stemming from the armed crisis in Cameroon's Anglophone regions. The research traces the

journey of displaced persons, the conditions of their reception in the cities of Douala, Dschang and Yaoundé, their socio-economic or professional integration, and their contribution to building a sustainable peace society. It explored the efforts of displaced populations to overcome the trauma caused by their situation as victims of war to contribute to the resolution of the crisis and the advent of sustainable peace. Students were able to travel to three locations to collect data for the research project.

Middlebury School in Chile

Orientation activity: As part of the spring semester student orientation, Professor Sarah Stroup, Executive Director of the CT Collaborative, offered a brief presentation on CT principles and approaches.

Middlebury School in France

Two New Courses: First, *The EU, an Unprecedented Experiment in the Socialization of Conflicts*, is a course that examined the European Union's history and role in resolving conflict. It focused on the socialization of conflicts and the need for member states with very divergent positions to compromise. The course featured European negotiation simulations and an excursion to see the European Parliament in action. Second, *Taking to the Streets: Conflicts, Revolts and Social Movements in France, from Confrontation to Resolution & Transformation*, is a course focused on social and political protest movements and their resolution in contemporary France. The course addressed two fundamental questions: what is the legitimacy of the revolt and what is the capacity of transformation of these revolts into positive social change? The class included an excursion to the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, a part of the French government designed to connect civil society with government. Students learned how government institutions can promote productive dialogue by engaging directly with citizens.

Excursion activity: Global Partnerships for Sustainability (GPS) is a collaboration between the Middlebury Schools Abroad and Middlebury's Office of Sustainability and Integration, developing partnerships with sustainability-focused organizations in the locations where the Schools operate. A pilot project in France began in 2021 in collaboration with the CREA Mont-Blanc research center in Chamonix, which specializes in the study of natural mountain environments focusing on communication and education initiatives. CT goals have now been incorporated in Phase 3 of the project. Students prepared for their trip by completing readings and reflections on the CT concept and the role of a changing climate in current and emerging conflicts.

Middlebury School in Japan

Documentary filming: A group of Middlebury College students, alumni, and staff worked with the School in Japan staff and citizens from Tenryu Mura, a mountain village in Nagano Prefecture to film what will become a series of short documentaries to be complete by summer 2024. The films tell the story of a prisoner of war camp located in the village during WWII. Many Chinese and Korean forced laborers lost lives working in the construction of a dam. The documentary will also tell the story of the village families whose fathers and sons were fighting and dying in the war. The film crew was made up of three College alumni under the direction of Film and Media Culture department's Audiovisual Technical Director Ethan Murphy. Two current School in Japan students served as translators and provided logistical support.

Middlebury School in Oxford

Conference: On February 7, 2023, Lord John Alderdice gave a lecture to CMRS students at our facility in Oxford. Lord Alderdice was Leader of Northern Ireland's cross-community Alliance Party from 1988 to 1998 and a negotiator of the Good Friday Agreement. He was appointed by the British Government to be one of four international commissioners monitoring the standing down of the paramilitary organizations and the normalizing of security in Ireland. He has also served as a Liberal Democrat peer in the UK House of Lords since 1996. He described the difficulties of negotiating with all sides – from the British Government to the IRA. 32 students attended and several described it as the high point of their time at Oxford. M-CMRS leadership is planning future collaboration with Lord Alderdice.

Middlebury School in Puerto Rico

Excursion activity: The program took a three-day excursion to explore the history of conflict related to the presence of the US Marine Corps in Ceiba and Vieques and the story of local resistance and struggle to end this occupation. Students met with Ceiba residents to learn about their efforts to transform social conditions into opportunities for growth and positive social change. They also learned how a local NGO, now housed in re-purposed military building, is helping citizens develop micro-enterprises in lands previously controlled by the U.S. Navy. In Vieques, students learned about the fishermen who fought the six decade-long use of live ammunition by the U.S. navy for military exercises, the civil disobedience camps established in bombardment zones, and the local, national, and global coalition which eventually led to the cessation of U.S. Navy activity on the island in 2003.. Efforts are underway to promote a solidarity economy based on agroecological principles that promote equity and justice.

Middlebury School in Uruguay

Semester-long activity: Six students participated in an ongoing collaboration with [Redalco](#), a local NGO focusing on social injustice and unequal distribution of food through the recovery of discarded food at the Central Market and distribution to disadvantaged sectors. Our students first participated in the process of recovering discarded edible food at the Central Market. Subsequently students assisted in distributing food through different centers that organize emergency food services for disadvantaged neighborhoods, while learning about their perspectives and priorities. Finally, students attended a lecture on the concept, problems, and solutions to inequitable food distribution.

School of the Environment

The School of the Environment added a new scholarship this year called the Award for Environmental Equity, Justice, and Conflict Transformation. In addition to existing merit scholarships in environmental storytelling and environmental science, this scholarship supports students with a specific vision of implementing conflict transformation methods in future environmental initiatives. \$15,000 supported 9 recipients: 5 Middlebury College students and 4 from colleges and universities other than Middlebury: Kenyon College, University of Denver, Colgate University, and American University.

Global Courses

A portion of Pillar 5 funding has been reserved to fund two global courses per year. Global courses combine conflict transformation work with travel outside of the US for a significant portion of the class time. Faculty from the College and from MIIS are eligible to apply for this opportunity. A single course was funded this year, *Peacebuilding and Reconciliation in the Balkans* by Professor Thor Sawin. Two courses have been selected for funding in 2023-2024: *Land and Society in the Caribbean*, by Middlebury College professor Michael Sheridan, and *Water Conflict and Development in Southeast Asia*, by Professors Wei Liang from MIIS and Jessica Teets from Middlebury College.

Peacebuilding and Reconciliation in the Balkans: A Spring 2023 Intercultural Communication graduate course offered by MIIS in Zagreb, Croatia, with visits to cities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Students heard from over 20 different activists working on peacebuilding and visited sites related to nationalist conflict focusing primarily on the 1991-1995 war. Before the trip, students learned about conflict transformation models, the history of conflict in the region, the post-conflict status quo, and recent developments. They also developed elementary proficiency in Bosnian, Croatian, or Serbian. The course posed the question of how citizens of a country such as Yugoslavia, seen as a model of interreligious harmony and who spoke the same language, could be “languaged into hatred” to the point of committing genocide. We explored how people might subsequently get “languaged back into peace,” studying media discourse, political parties, the educational system, and civil society groups that are creating space for peacebuilding projects.

FACULTY RESEARCH

We have committed to support faculty research at the College and Institute, developing our knowledge base in conflict analysis and conflict transformation. Our second round of research grant applications opened in Fall 2022, with selections made in December for the calendar year in 2023.

At the College, we awarded seven Conflict Transformation Research Grants to support innovative research ideas and to leverage additional external funds at the College. Please note that although seven grants were awarded in this cycle, the total value awarded remained within the allocated budget, as multiple grantees requested significantly less than the per-award cap.

- Lida Winfield, Christal Brown, Laurel Jenkins, Karima Borni, Meshi Chavez, Michael Abbatiello, Tiffany Wilbur, “Movement Matters: Global Body in Conflict” (Dance)
- Febe Armanios, “‘One Bite and All is Forgiven’: Paths to Gastro-Diplomacy and Conciliatory Foodways in Cyprus and Turkey” (History, Food Studies)
- Carly Thomsen, Laurie Essig, “Feminist Studies vs. Feminist Activism” (Gender, Sexuality, & Feminist Studies)
- Jamie McCallum, “A Better Bargain: Transforming Conflict Negotiation Processes Between Workers and Management” (Sociology)
- Marybeth Eleanor Nevins, “Rural Vermont Community Responses to Claims of Anthropogenic Climate Change” (Anthropology)
- Ajay Verghese, Roberto Foa, “The Roots of Hindu-Muslim Conflict in India” (Political Science)
- Suzanne Gurland, “Perspective-Taking in Conflict Transformation” (Psychology)

Four proposals from MIIS were awarded funding beginning in January 2023.

- Jeff Langholz, “Flowing Toward Peace: Opportunities and Obstacles for Transforming Water Conflicts through Decentralized, On-site Water Production” (International Environmental Policy)
- David Wick, “Host Community Impacts of Study Centers Abroad: Transaction, Extraction, Transformation” (International Education Management)
- Lyuba Zarsky, “Indigenous People vs Decarbonization? Exploring and overcoming conflicts between mining of critical materials for clean technology and Native rights, lands and cultures in the US” (International Environmental Policy)
- James Lamson, “Adding North Korea Case Study to Strategic Empathy Project” (James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies)

The grant commits to equal funding for the College and Institute. We had a smaller pool of MIIS faculty apply for CT funding in the second round. This fall, we will be working with colleagues in our grants office to promote this funding opportunity more widely at the Institute.

CROSS-PILLAR INITIATIVES

The structure of the Collaborative helpfully identifies a core group of CT leaders and allows the Pillar Heads autonomy over their area of expertise. However, and happily, much of the work of the CT Collaborative is being done in consultation or even in partnership across Pillars, as evident in the Pillar narratives above and in the research grant selection committee. This is a decentralized model of program design and implementation, with the Collaborative staff supporting information sharing, relationship building, reflection and learning, and consulting on program design where appropriate.

The development of a conflict transformation curriculum at the College is a key cross-pillar initiative.. The development of the course has also involved consultation with all pillar heads and with many stakeholders across the institution. We have had productive conversations about tailoring the content of a CT curriculum to our various audiences, based on their educational stage and interests. We have created a Canvas site (using Middlebury's course management system) as a repository of sample syllabi, exercises, and readings. We will be exploring other ways to highlight a shared set of key themes in CT while retaining necessary flexibility.

One important lesson from our pilot curricular efforts is the need to separate out *conflict analysis* and *skill-building*. Our attempt to compress those two goals into a single course in the Winter term was challenging. Thus, this spring we submitted and received approval for a new course, Theories and Fundamentals of Conflict Transformation (SOCI 0225/ INTD 0225). The first instructor will be sociology professor Chong-suk Han (grant recipient in the first round of CT research funds, two-time participant in the Engaged Listening Project, member of the CT research grant selection committee). In the fall, 8 faculty from various disciplines will meet to offer input into this interdisciplinary course.

These cross-pillar curricular offerings are also expanding through connections to “Mindfulness at Middlebury,” a decade-old effort at the College that has recently receded in prominence. Mindfulness practices are one key path into critical self-awareness. In spring 2023, we discussed and formalized a collaboration with education studies professor Melissa Hammerle, who will be leading convenings with the Mindfulness group in the fall and teaching a “mindfulness and conflict” course in Spring 2024.

Finally, the work across our Pillars have been informed by the initial reflections of our new External Advisory Board. In 2022-23, we partnered with the Middlebury President's Office to invite a range of experts to consult with us on an external advisory board. As of June 2023, members include:

- Naazneen Barma, Director, Scrivener Institute of Public Policy, University of Denver
- Sigal Ben-Porath, University of Pennsylvania
- David Camp, Founder, the Dialogue Company
- Susan Clark, Creative Discourse Group, co-author of *Slow Democracy*
- Peter Dixon, Associate Professor of Practice in Negotiation, Columbia University
- John Paul Lederach, University of Notre Dame
- Jonathan Owsley, Managing Partner, L Catterton
- Nancy Thomas, Director of the Institute for Democracy & Higher Education, Tufts University

The first convening of the external advisory board was held in March 2023, chaired by Middlebury Vice President for Equity & Inclusion Khuram Hussain, and with President Patton in attendance. The board had reviewed our annual report and the syllabus for our pilot CT Skills course. They praised the scope, ambition, and execution of our new projects. They invited us to look ahead to make this an enduring project, to connect to colleagues working on civic engagement and the democratic arts, and to integrate attention to conflict entrepreneurs, power dynamics, and groups across the ideological spectrum. The next meeting has been scheduled for August 2023.

We are developing ways to assess the impact of these efforts. This first year, we have focused on establishing a baseline measure of the willingness and capacity of our students to engage in constructive conflict. This spring and summer, we are reviewing existing survey data and identifying questions that will help us measure change across time in our student populations as a whole and for those participating in CT courses and experiences. The initial material suggests that we are making good strides, while offering rich feedback that will help us learn and improve these many new pilot efforts (see Appendix).

Across the diverse programs and projects covered by CT, we have begun conversations about how to build in new assessment questions or standardize our evaluations. For example, in Pillar 3, the same question will be asked of all participants in CT-funded experiences in Summer 2023: “Identify a significant conflict you observed or encountered in your work. How did you navigate the conflict and what would you like to learn more about as a result?”

One CT-specific assessment was piloted in May 2023 with the MIIS Cohort Fellows, with roughly half the fellows (n=22) responding after the end of the semester.

- One question asked students to indicate their agreement with the statement that “I am more prepared to work with people from backgrounds other than mine,” based on their participation in the CT program. The average response was 4.14 (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).
- *Asked how they navigated tensions in their project:* “Working with a particular individual that was not good at communicating and then expected deliverables to be done a very specific way even though they had not mentioned this. I learned to navigate conflict by being patient and putting the project's mission above my personal needs.”
- *Asked what advice they would give to future fellows:* “The CT cohort offers an excellent platform for interdisciplinary communication, creating a wonderful sensation through the collision of diverse perspectives. It also provides an opportunity to leverage strengths and compensate for weaknesses. Please make the most of it and enjoy the experience.”

In the undergraduate CT Skills course, we used two other instruments in addition to course response forms. First, students submitted via Flip videos describing CT (see the first video, “What is Conflict Transformation?” at [our website here](#)). Second, we offered a Google form for feedback, noting that the class was a pilot and students’ feedback was critical. 20 students responded. Some selections:

- *Asked to comment on the class content:* “Critical self-awareness was the one that stood out to me the most because in conflict you often only see the problem or the opponent. It is not often where you get a chance to look at yourself and see how you contribute to the dilemma.”
- *Asked to comment on the class content:* “I think that we might have spent a bit too much time on the conflict analysis piece and would have liked to engage in more classroom dialogue about polarizing issues in order to practice the skills we've studied.”
- *Open ended response:* “I want to say that I am incredibly appreciative of the effort all instructors put into this course. I imagine this was a hard task (building a program from the ground up, creating a syllabus from scratch), and I think you all deserve a huge pat on the back!”

Unfortunately, course response forms for Spring 2023 at the College were lost in a technical mishap, so we cannot report on the responses from the course co-taught by Patton and Stroup.

The CT Collaborative has continued to expand its reach outside Middlebury. First, we have joined and offered critical support to the Vermont Restorative Approaches Collaborative (VTRAC). VTRAC offers resources and a network of practitioners for embedding restorative practices in regional learning communities. The CT Collaborative will be supporting their website development, designing a Middlebury student internship to work with the organization, and enrolling multiple staff and faculty as VTRAC members. Second, we have joined the Alliance for Peacebuilding, a network of more than 180 international member organizations. We subsequently sponsored interested MIIS students to attend the virtual portion of AFP’s annual PeaceCon conference in May.

We also continue to explore new partnership opportunities. Over the past six months, CT Collaborative staff have met with the following individuals to learn about their organizations and share our work:

- Loida Alvarez, Center for Nonviolent Communication
- Peter Dixon '01.5 and Naomi Levy, Everyday Peace Indicators
- Alex Lalli, Hula (Vermont) and See Change Sessions
- Susan Terry, Vermont mediation pioneer
- Manu Meel and Hailey Addison, BRIDGE USA
- Max Murphy and Naomi Swinton, United World College USA
- Mark Wennberg, restorative justice consultant
- Megan Zahneis, Chronicle of Higher Education

In Spring 2023, CT director Stroup has given presentations on conflict transformation to multiple Middlebury constituencies (MIIS, Advancement Office, President's Leadership Council, Schools Abroad). She also gave a talk at the Ilsley Library in Middlebury in March, at the invitation of the local chapter of American Association of University Women (AAUW).

Other organizations and media outlets have sought to understand and elevate our work.

- The CT Collaborative was featured in an April 2023 article in *INSIGHT Into Diversity*, a magazine focused on advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education. The article is available here: <https://www.insightintodiversity.com/engaging-in-productive-dialogue/>.
- CT director Stroup was interviewed by Interfaith America in February 2023. In partnership with More Perfect -- a national campaign collaboration among nine presidential centers, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the Karsh Institute for Democracy at UVA – Interfaith America is developing a landscape analysis of the scope, models, and outstanding needs of bridgebuilding work within higher education. The report will be published later this summer.

Website: The CT Collaborative has worked with the Middlebury Communications team to continuously improve our dedicated website. It features news stories about our activities; research and pedagogy resources; suggested readings; and more. It has gone through a recent refresh to augment its offerings, including links to partners, a public version of our annual report, and additional video content.

Newsletter: The CT Collaborative distributed two issues of our newsletter in the past six months, one each during the January and Spring terms. They are also available to download from our website. Content typically includes a note from the Director; highlights from recent programming; blurbs about upcoming opportunities; and featured stories about students, faculty, and/or partners. We continue to add additional recipients to our mailing list.

Instagram: In Fall 2022, the CT Collaborative launched an Instagram feed (@conflicttransformationmidd), based on guidance from the Communications team about best practices in reaching student audiences. It currently has more than 200 followers—roughly a 100% increase over the figures reported in our January 2023 annual report—and is being used to advertise talks, spotlight assorted activities, and explain the CT Collaborative's mission.

Podcast: A CT-themed podcast is in early stages of development. As of mid-July, we have four episodes in final revision, three completed, and have gathered audio for two other interviews. Our goal is to launch the podcast in late August at the start of the academic year. We will schedule release of these existing episodes through the fall semester while gathering new content. We will use an existing show, "Opening Up," which was launched through a prior initiative, the Engaged Listening Project.

APPENDIX: SAMPLE SURVEY DATA

Below, we include survey data and individual responses from various CT supported programs.

Law, Advocacy and Conflict Transformation Trek to New York City, Spring 2023 (Pillar 3)

Student feedback on the impact of the trek, its lessons, and its takeaways.

- “One of the themes that stood out to me on this trip was human connection. Law and advocacy should focus on human stories and personal connections to be successful. Conflicts are also best resolved through these lenses, so making this connection helped me realize the importance of law and advocacy in conflict resolution.”
- “This trip inspired me to study more about conflict transformation. I hope to take Laurie Patton's Conflict Transformation skills course. I am also more comfortable with my undeclared major in International Politics and Economics. I learned that many issues in the law are intercultural and understanding other systems of politics and how they interact with our government system is important to consider.”
- “This experience was extremely eye-opening. Apart from learning about conflict transformation, it was an amazing opportunity to meet and bond with people that are interested in similar things. I love that the program included all four grades because it gave me the opportunity to meet upperclassmen and learn about their experiences at Middlebury, we have kept in touch and I am really able to learn and gain a lot from those relationships.”

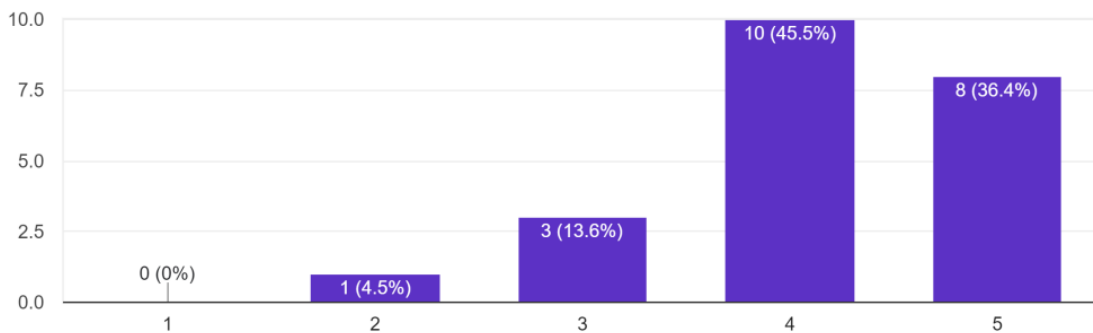
Every student rated their overall trek experience as “Extremely satisfied.” Eight of the students responded “somewhat agree” or “strongly agree” to the statement “I feel better prepared to engage productively with people across different identities and backgrounds.” To the statement “This trek has made me more likely to pursue additional programming related to law, advocacy and conflict transformation in the future,” 10 students responded “somewhat agree” or “strongly agree.”

MIIS CT Graduate Fellows Survey

Below, we include the summary survey responses from the pilot CT evaluation sent to Pillar 4 fellowship participants at the end of the Spring 2023 semester. All questions were framed as follows: “As a result of your participation in this Conflict Transformation program, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.” Values range from 1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree.

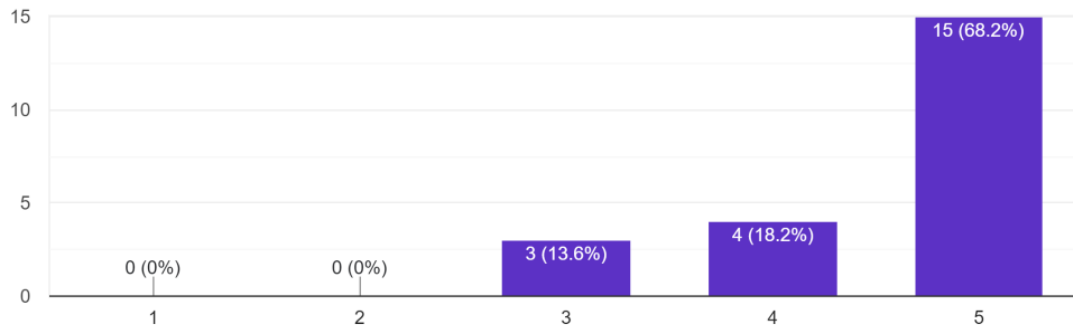
I am more prepared to work with people from backgrounds other than mine.

22 responses



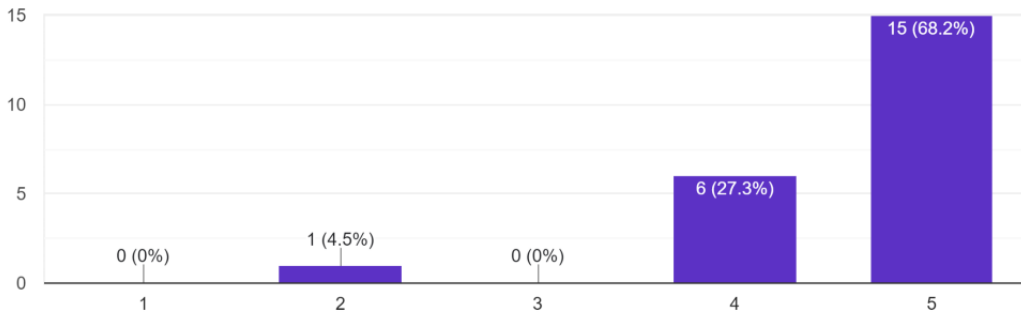
I understand how cultural issues may impact a conflict intervention.

22 responses



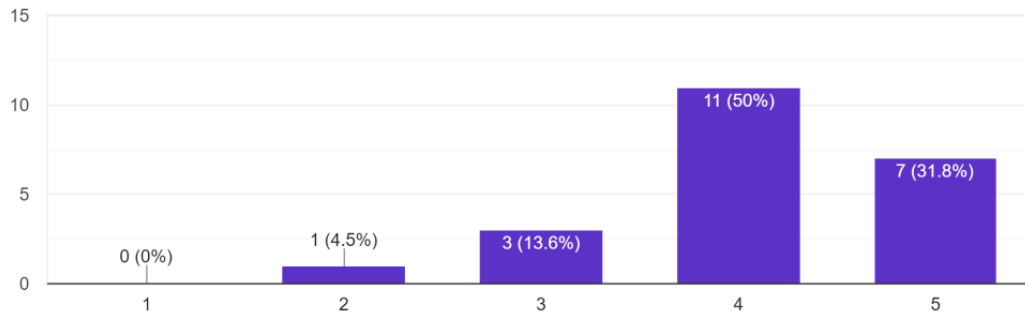
I am interested in exploring the topics of conflict, peacebuilding, and/or intercultural understanding in my future courses.

22 responses



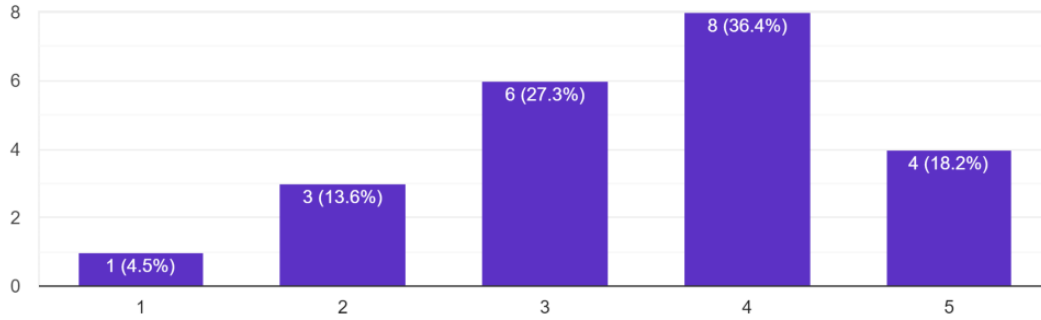
I can engage in conversations I feel strongly about even if the other person disagrees with me.

22 responses



I can develop an intervention plan for working with the key stakeholders, issues and dynamics of a conflict.

22 responses



I can compare and contrast the differences in approaches used by conflict interveners and assess their applications in various settings.

22 responses

