



Dr. Kamal Shahrabi

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## A message from the President

### **Dear Friend of RIT Kosovo (A.U.K.),**

I am immensely proud to introduce to you the “Fred C. Cuny Center for Peace & Conflict Studies,” with key information about its mission, dedicated faculty and staff, and our plans going forward. I am also pleased to provide an opportunity to support the important efforts of the center as it strives towards a better understanding of conflict - with the ultimate purpose of making the world a more peaceful and safer place to be.

At RIT Kosovo (A.U.K), our commitment to providing an exceptional educational experience and advancing knowledge is unwavering. We have always believed in the transformative power of education, and our ongoing mission is to make this power accessible to all, irrespective of background or circumstance. This commitment drives us to continually enhance our programs and facilities to provide our students with the best opportunities for growth, learning, and innovation.

The Fred C. Cuny Center for Peace & Conflict Studies represents one such endeavor. It is a vision brought to life by the dedication and collaboration of our academic community and supporters like you who share our commitment to education, research, and global engagement. This Center bears the name of the influential humanitarian and disaster relief specialist who has worked in crises in more than 50 countries, Fred Cuny. Importantly, Fred Cuny believed in the potential of students and the transformative impact of international education.

The Fred C. Cuny Center for Peace & Conflict Studies aims to provide students with an enriching learning experience that goes beyond the traditional classroom, fostering cross-cultural understanding and research opportunities in a global context. As the world continues to be ravaged by conflict and crises, the need for such programs is as timely as ever. This Center offers a platform for understanding and collaboration for all those passionate about finding innovative solutions for peace, including efforts to address complex and long-lasting conflicts and disputes.

We invite you to be a vital part of this important endeavor. Your support will make a great impact on our students' lives, giving them the opportunity to participate in this unique program and engage in research activities that have the potential to shape not only their futures, but also the world as we know it for the better.

I would like to express my gratitude for your consideration of this proposal, and I am confident that together we can empower the next generation of leaders and thinkers.

With warm regards,

**Dr. Kamal Shahrabi**  
**President, RIT Kosovo (A.U.K)**



# Fred C. Cuny Center for Peace & Conflict Studies

## About Us

### Mission Statement

The Frederick C. Cuny Center for Peace & Conflict Studies aims to provide an academic and multidisciplinary platform for studying the causes, practices, and consequences of war and political violence, as well as the methods of conflict management and conflict resolution. The research undertaken by the Center helps academics, international and local government practitioners, and civil society to understand the political, historical, legal, social, cultural, and psychological aspects of conflict, assist in the formulation of policies that effectively manage and resolve conflicts, and advise on international peacekeeping and state-building efforts.

### Vision

The core of the Center's aspirations is derived from its namesake, Frederick C. Cuny, a humanitarian and disaster relief specialist who revolutionized aid and relief operations. Having responded to emergencies in more than 50 countries, Cuny garnered a reputation for accomplishing the impossible by saving lives in incredibly complex circumstances, often at risk of his own. He was unrelenting in his quest to help others based on visions of a shared humanity and the larger dream of peace. In his memory, it is the Center's vision to pursue the same mission to bring understanding, reconciliation, and transformation to communities across the globe by empowering youth through peace education. Students involved in the Center will not only develop a passion for humanitarian work but will also develop the critical thinking necessary for confronting, resolving, and transforming conflict through engaging classes, language/culture exposure, skill-applicable internships, and practical research opportunities. The Center will educate students by drawing extensively from experiences with conflict, peacekeeping, and statebuilding in the Western Balkans, but it will also draw from related experiences in other conflict areas in the Middle East and Africa. In this sense, the Center's vision rests on developing tomorrow's humanitarian leaders and preparing them for a future similar to Cuny's: riddled with impossible missions waiting to be transformed into opportunities for lasting peace.

# Center staff



Robert Muharremi

**Center Director**



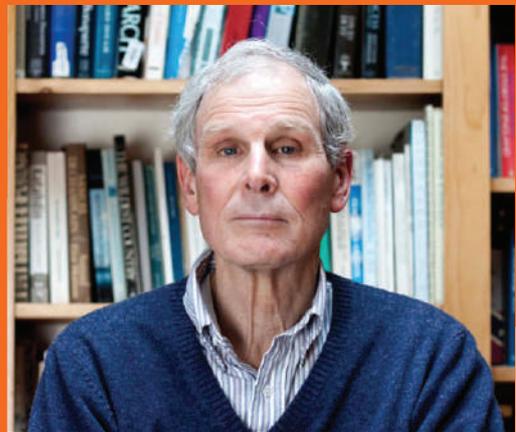
Holland Pratt

**Center Coordinator**



Madison Poe

**Center Coordinator**



Professor Louis Sell

**Member**

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# Center staff



Professor Colonel (Ret.)  
Michael Hess

**Member**



Professor Jock Covey

**Member**



Professor Christopher Coleman

**Member**



In Memoriam - Professor  
Leonard Hawley

**Honorary Member**

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# Frederick C. Cuny Peace & Conflict Summer Program

The Summer Program is a premier international leadership and peace-building seminar taught by renowned practitioners and academics who have hands-on experience in the United Nations, national governments and militaries, humanitarian organizations, and the private sector. Under-graduate and graduate students are offered courses on war, diplomacy, state-building, peace-keeping, conflict transformation, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, post-conflict and transitional justice, international human rights, and development economics. This program will equip students with the necessary skills from a practitioner's perspective for careers in government, international organizations, think tanks, and academia. The Summer Program's courses are accredited by the Rochester Institute of Technology in Kosovo (RIT Kosovo).

## The program offers the following unique features:

- **Regional Travel:** The programs include a joint, one-week study tour to Albania, Montenegro, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where students learn about the region and its history by meeting local stakeholders and activists and visiting historical and recreational areas.
- **Live What You Are Learning:** Kosovo is a 'living laboratory' of history and state-building in the heart of the Balkans and an ideal location to explore the origin and resolution of armed conflict and mass atrocities, reconstruction, international peacekeeping, institution-building, justice, and reconciliation efforts at the end of wars.
- **Practitioner-Focused and Mentorship Based:** Courses are taught by senior civilian and military officials, NGO activists, and academics with hands-on experience in the Balkans, Middle East, and elsewhere. The staff function not just as instructors but as mentors invested in your professional development as a leader in international affairs.
- **Professional Exposure:** You will meet Kosovo government senior officials, activists, and officials from diplomatic and international missions.
- **Intellectual Stimulation:** Visit historically significant sites in Kosovo, take part in informal late-afternoon seminars on current issues, and participate in workshops/simulations of peacekeeping operations and reconciliation efforts.

## Program Dates:

Part I - 20 May to 29 June 2024

Part II - 24 June to 26 July 2024

Internships - July - August 2024

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## **Program Overviews**

### **Part I. Human Rights, Transitional Justice, and International Law Program**

This is a premier international human rights and justice program where students have the opportunity to investigate the converging dynamics of human rights, mass atrocity occurrences, and post-conflict reconciliation and their critical impacts on peacebuilding. In line with the 'living laboratory' example of Kosovo, this program will immerse students into the processes promoting human rights protection, preventing mass atrocities, and facilitating justice. Course subjects will include the role of international law in conflict resolution, the causes and effects of atrocities like genocide and ethnic cleansing, and the considerations behind post-conflict justice and reconciliation. These courses will be taught by experienced practitioners and academics who possess unique insights into conflict in the Balkans. The program's education is amplified through its diverse range of international students possessing a critical passion for human rights protection, promotion, and application. Engagements with organizations like the Humanitarian Law Center Kosovo and the USAID Kosovo Office will supplement course understanding with visible subject-application.

**Courses (students choose two):**

**POLS-330: Human Rights in a Global Perspective**

**POLS-325: International Law and Organizations**

**ANTH-345: Genocide and Transitional Justice**

### **Part II. Peacekeeping and Conflict Management Summer Program**

This is a premier international leadership and peacekeeping program where students have the opportunity to explore the history, politics, and economics of conflict situations in an environment that serves as a living example of the subject. You'll learn about the background of the Kosovo conflict of the late 20th century, the dynamic nature of security in the period following the fighting, and continuing challenges to conflict transformation and development. Courses in areas such as war and peace in the Balkans, the role of the international community in conflict resolution, and economic development in post-conflict areas will be taught by renowned experts who have hands-on experience in the crises of the Balkans and elsewhere. Classes include students from around the world sharing one thing in common: an interest in learning about the timeless issues of war and peace in a newly-born country. Your classroom experience will be further enhanced by day trips across the region, highlighting the rich cultural diversity and history of the Balkans.

**Courses (students choose two):**

**POLS-541: Peacekeeping and Conflict Transformation**

**POLS-542: War, Diplomacy and Statebuilding**

**POLS-445: Terrorism and Political Violence**

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## Research/Publications

The Center undertakes research and offers policy advice on peace and conflict related topics to international organizations and governments. It also serves as a platform for the exchange of research and experiences between academia and peacekeeping and state-building practitioners to evaluate existing policies and propose new or improved approaches. The Center's publications, primarily in the form of policy papers, policy briefs, and policy newsletters inform academics and practitioners of the latest developments in peace and conflict studies, policies, and policy proposals.

The Center offers research fellow and intern positions where students design and implement a specific research project in association with the Frederick C. Cuny Peace & Conflict Center. These roles represent an opportunity to gain academic research experience and contribute to academic literature on peace and conflict or genocide studies. Work will be performed in accordance with the RIT Kosovo's research integrity policy and all other relevant policies.

- These two positions have dual goals in terms of the research project and career development. The training and development relevant to this position will be completed within the timeline developed by the fellow/intern and their supervisor in which time fellows/interns will continue to develop skills and competencies with respect to the role and future career options.
- It is a legitimate objective of the Center to provide Research Internship training opportunities which are of limited duration. This will allow for the progression over many years of intergenerational researchers trained in the methods and practice of research and scholarship.

## UPCOMING: Balkans Civil-Military Relations Conference

The region of Western Balkans has undergone significant political, social, and economic transformations in the past decades while grappling with the legacy of conflict and authoritarianism. In the aftermath of the 90s wars, the role of civil-military relations has become increasingly significant given the need to ensure that security forces operate within the framework of democratic principles and are accountable to the civilian leadership. Civil-military relations are critical in promoting stability, security, and democracy not just in Kosovo but in the entire region. Good civil-military relations are also pivotal in building trust between the military and the civilian population, especially in countries that have experienced conflict and where the security forces may be perceived as hostile or sources of tension and instability. In particular, Kosovo presents an interesting case study for civil military relations due to its unique historical context, post-conflict environment characterized by rapidly changing political and social conditions; NATO's intervention and the need to understand roles and responsibilities of military and civilian authorities in post-conflict situations; and multi-ethnic composition requiring careful consideration of issues such as minority rights representation, and integration.

In spite of the important role in ensuring that security sector development is based on democratic principles (i.e. respect for rule of law and adherence to human rights) – the field of civil military relations remains an understudied and unexplored topic in Kosovo and the region. This conference hosted by RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) will provide a unique platform to gather stakeholders from different sectors to:

- Engage in a dialogue around civil-military relations between the security forces/military, government, civil society, and academia;
- Discuss best practices and identify challenges as well as opportunities for developing innovative approaches to complex problems; and
- Promote cooperation and understanding between the military and the civilian population.

In addition, the Fred C. Cuny Peace and Conflict Center aims to expose students to the academic fields of war, diplomacy, state-building, peacekeeping, conflict transformation, post-conflict and transitional justice, international human rights, and development economics. The Center also equips students with the necessary skills from a practitioner's perspective for careers in government, international organizations, think tanks, and academia. In conjunction with ongoing coursework, this RIT Kosovo- hosted conference will provide students the opportunity to:

- Learn from experts and practitioners in civil-military relations about the topic, its challenges, and current Western Balkan dynamics;
- Engage with professionals in the security forces/military, government, civil society, and academia;
- Participate in a tabletop exercise facilitated by practitioners and produce written, relevant work as an outcome.

## **Building Connections**

In line with the Center's focus on development, recent efforts seek to expand academic and practitioner focus on regional integration within the Balkans, particularly when it comes to collaboration on security, resilient institutions, and ethnic relations. For this reason, the Center has established relationships with the following institutions and programs:

- Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR)
- United States Military Academy of West Point Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies
- Post Conflict Research Center
- Kosovo Center for Security Studies

## **UPCOMING: Graduate Certificate in Peace and Conflict Studies**

The new Graduate Certificate in Peace and Conflict Studies will seek to educate students on how conflict is engaged, resolved, and transformed for the aims of establishing and sustaining peace. This program is meant to develop students in three main ways: academic rigor, research development, and practical skills application. To accomplish this, the 12 credits include research methods engagement and interest-focused electives like peacekeeping, international human rights law, and genocide studies. The program is unique in its ideal location in Kosovo for studying both past and ongoing conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. Taught by practitioners, this program aims to develop tomorrow's humanitarian leaders and prepare them for a future riddled with impossible missions waiting to be transformed into opportunities for lasting peace.

### **Course options:**

- Peace Keeping and Conflict Transformation (3 credits)
- Human Rights in Global Perspectives (3 credits)
- War, Diplomacy, and Statebuilding (3 credits)
- International Law and Organizations (3 credits)
- Terrorism and Political Violence (3 credits)
- Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing (3 credits)