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Studying conflict, violence and peace in African universities

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Abstract

The aims of this article are to present the case for the study of conflict, violence and peace in African universities and to discuss ways by which this might be organised. It begins with a discussion of the meanings of conflict, violence and peace, as used in the discipline of peace studies. The case for studying peace is then laid out, with particular reference to the beliefs that non-violent ways of resolving conflict are effective and can be learned. The nature and extent of peace studies in African universities is then surveyed and ideas are presented concerning the content of peace studies modules. A distinction is drawn between peace studies and political science; the former emphasises the importance of structural violence, that the means used to build peace must be consistent with the ends aimed for and that students can learn to adopt peace as a way of life. The article concludes by examining five ways of setting up a peace studies programme. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Harris, Geoff, E-Mail: harrisg1@ukzn.ac.za