

Conflict Resolution Program | Graduate Assistantship

The Carter Center's Conflict Resolution Program is seeking a qualified graduate student to conduct research and analysis related to the following research project.

Understanding Best Practices for Depolarization in Faith Communities in the U.S.:

This project focuses on providing faith communities with the means to address polarization and division within and outside their congregations, including engaging young people ages 18-30 in community-level multifaith peacebuilding activities. The research aims to develop indicators and measures to assess what works to reduce division within faith communities, including, but not limited to, a focus on young people. Working with the Conflict Resolution Program senior project advisor and program associate, the graduate assistant will identify and assess program models being used in other contexts and evaluate their applicability to current work being conducted in Georgia and elsewhere under the auspices of Faith Forward Democracy. The GA will be expected to prepare two working papers, one that develops evaluation methodology and a second that highlights lessons learned for building faith networks and multifaith depolarization activities. Depending on the GA's experience and interest, they may advise on network expansion strategies and support depolarization activities within and outside of faith communities, including developing outreach materials, facilitated dialogues, and training.

The graduate assistant will be expected to do the following:

- Produce one research paper that surveys existing activities and methodologies related to multifaith youth peacebuilding activities, extracting key approaches and lessons learned for effective programming.
- Produce a second paper that develops a methodology for evaluating impact in the context of the Georgia Faith Forward Democracy youth peacebuilding cohort, documenting learnings from its formation, network building, and activities.
- At least one of the papers should be of sufficient quality to deliver at an academic conference or for public presentation in an online seminar format.

Key benchmarks for review include the following tangible deliverables:

- I. Paper 1. List of U.S.-focused programs, contacts, available training materials, and other evaluations or reports relating to faith-based depolarization and peacebuilding initiatives, with a subfocus on youth initiatives, extracting best practices and lessons learned. Paper 2. Apply best-practice methodology to develop an evaluation methodology for faith-based peacebuilding activities in Georgia.
- II. Draft research proposals, including research design, data collection plan, survey tool design, and a high-level work plan articulating when the project is expected to move through its various stages.



- III. Annotated outline for each proposed paper assessed through weekly meetings with Conflict Resolution Program senior project advisor.
- IV. Deliver one invited talk each semester sharing current research findings with the Conflict Resolution Program staff, other peace program staff, and other interested stakeholders. Like an academic conference presentation, these talks will include a 20- to 40-minute presentation followed by Q&A.

Qualifications:

- Currently enrolled graduate who has completed at least two semesters of academic coursework.
- A weekly commitment, between 10 and 20 hours, for a period of nine to 12 months.
- Strong research, writing, communication, and analytical skills.
- Selected candidates will need to be a self-starter and should be able to work independently.
- An understanding of interfaith and cross-cultural dialogue approaches along with qualitative evaluation methodologies.
- May be called on to train or mentor interns on issues/skills that intersect the GA's expertise and the program's ongoing initiatives.
- Demonstrated interest in faith, peacebuilding, and politics in the U.S., including awareness of different approaches to bridge-building, depolarization, and community conflict transformation.
- Familiarity with public debate on the intersections between church and state, including a demonstrated understanding of a range of positions on how faith leaders interact with politics and governance.
- Ideal candidates should have completed at least one graduate course focused on faith and politics or faith and peacebuilding and be familiar with key literature.
- Experience with training or engagement in facilitated dialogue processes is a plus.