

# Campus for Peace

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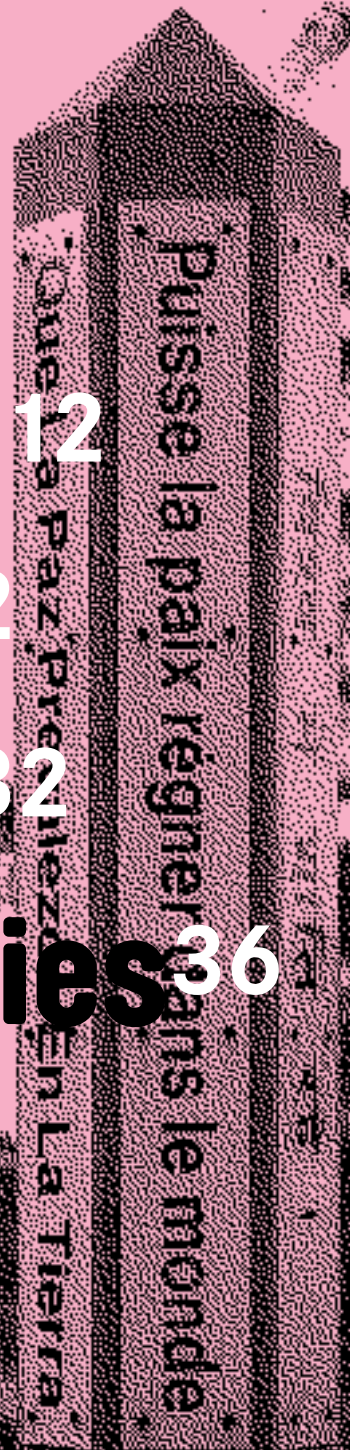
The university  
of the NGOs<sup>04</sup>

Virtual School  
of Cooperation<sup>12</sup>

Conflictology<sup>22</sup>

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# Campus for Peace

## Cooperation, Development, Sustainability

The campus that the UOC makes available to NGOs and solidarity initiatives

### Our goals:

- To contribute to peace processes.
- To promote human rights.
- To provide humanitarian aid in emergency situations.
- To ensure the sustainability of the planet.
- To facilitate literacy and access to knowledge.
- To promote the use of ICTs in the realm of cooperation.

### Our tools:

- We offer a wide range of online courses: official courses through the International Graduate Institute, customised training courses for NGOs and university extension programmes led by NGOs.
- We provide a virtual space for non-profit entities.
- We manage projects to host virtual offices and solidarity actions.
- We lead the virtual university volunteers.

We are open to proposals for virtual training for NGOs, public institutions, organisations, universities and any other non-profit entity.

[www.campusforpeace.org](http://www.campusforpeace.org)  
[www.uoc.edu](http://www.uoc.edu)  
[cooperacio@uoc.edu](mailto:cooperacio@uoc.edu)  
 +34 93 253 57 00 / 93 253 57 64



This QR code contains a link to the area of Humanitarian Cooperation, Peace and Sustainability of the UOC. Find more information on QR codes at:  
[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/QR\\_Code](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/QR_Code)

# The humanitarian university



**Eduard Vinyamata,**  
 Director of the Campus for Peace and Academic Director of the Area of Humanitarian Cooperation, Peace and Sustainability at the UOC.

The UOC's Campus for Peace was created with the goal of contributing to peace and solidarity with less fortunate individuals and societies and promoting development cooperation, humanitarian aid and sustainability. Grounded on the basic ethical principles of respect for human rights and the Earth Charter, our implicit objective is to offer training to make people autonomous and empower them to resolve their problems, non-violently defend their rights, live together in peace and prosper while respecting both the environment and others.

We educate online to solve humanitarian problems and challenges, and we prepare trainers all around the world with the purpose of providing concrete, pragmatic solutions to the specific needs of peoples and groups in situations of risk or marginalisation, in all areas of scientific and technological knowledge. We act in alliance with other universities, NGOs, humanitarian governmental institutions, foundations and all kinds of private and public organisations that share our objectives and ethical principles and we have massive distribution networks and the ability to act with the ultimate aid recipients.

We offer official university degrees and training in development cooperation through the Virtual School of Cooperation, we drive environmental education with the EcoUniversity, and we promote peace studies and conflict resolution through the Network of Peace Universities. In all three areas, we organise international gatherings of experts to develop joint strategic and tactical plans, foster operational networks to disseminate knowledge and publish innovative contents.

We work with prestigious organisations like the Red Cross, Engineering Without Borders, Amnesty International, Gaia Education, UNITAR, the UNDP and the World Organisation of the Scout Movement. We have agreements with universities in Africa, Latin America and Asia, and with international bodies. The training we offer encompasses more than 3,000 students, more than 200 lecturers and hundreds of courses in all realms of knowledge.

University education tends to be governed by the law at lower levels and by the market in postgraduate courses. We at the Campus for Peace are governed by humanitarian criteria and ideas. We are the Humanitarian University, the NGOs University, the University of Peace.

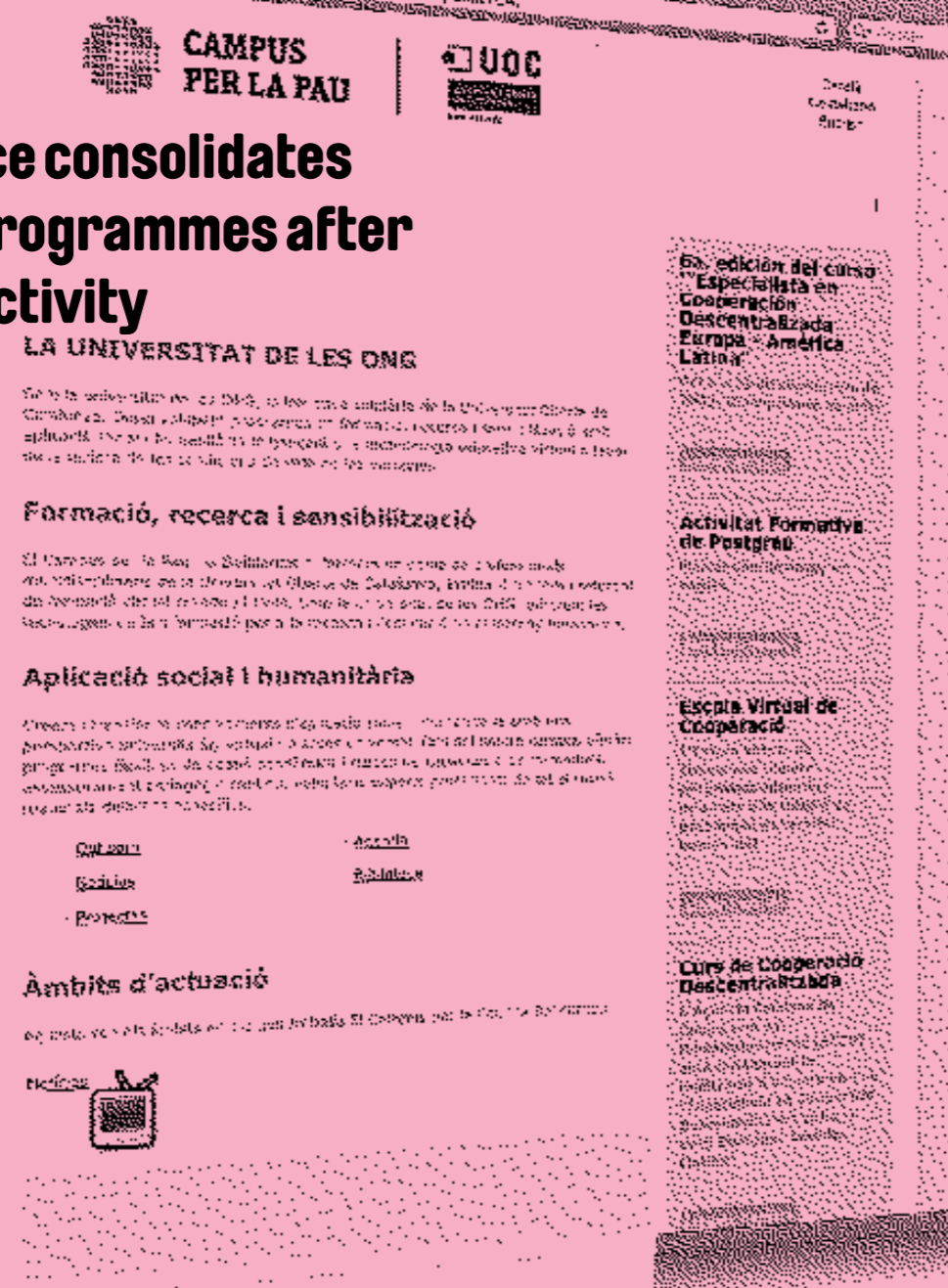
### + info:

**Area of Humanitarian Cooperation, Peace and Sustainability**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8m7NUXGQCE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8m7NUXGQCE)

# ITCs, at the service of cooperation

## The Campus for Peace consolidates its virtual training programmes after almost a decade of activity

1  
The university of the NGOs  
→



The Open University of Catalonia created the Campus for Peace, Cooperation, Development and Sustainability in 2000, dovetailing with Unesco's International Year for the Culture of Peace. The mission was to put the methodology and knowledge generated by the UOC at the service of peace, human rights, humanitarian aid, sustainability and literacy. In short, the goal was to contribute to improving the living conditions of the most disadvantaged people through scientific and technical knowledge and virtual education.

The director of the Campus for Peace, Eduard Vinyamata, recalls the first thing that occurred to him when the then Director of the UOC, Dr. Gabriel Ferrater, charged him with creating the new Area of Cooperation within the university. "A few years earlier I had been in a refugee camp near Mostar", he recounts, "and there I began to think about how the new technologies could improve the living conditions of people living in critical situations". The possibility of working

on this from the virtual setting of the UOC made that dream come true.

Almost one decade after it was created, the Campus for Peace is now a consolidated institution. It works with around 20 Spanish and international entities, NGOs and institutions, and from its original 30 students it has soared to a total of 3,342 in 2008. The forecasts for 2009 also show an upswing. Including the official education programmes, around 5,000 students will have taken one of the more than 100 courses taught by around 200 lecturers.

The innovation model of the Campus for Peace has been recognised by the Global University Network for Innovation, an international network of universities that value its public service efforts. The UOC's cooperation philosophy is not to go to a needy place and build infrastructures but to facilitate the transfer of knowledge so that the target societies can solve their problems themselves. →



## Sharing knowledge

Ten years ago, when the UOC was already consolidated in Catalonia and embarking on its expansion around the world, the then President Ferrater appointed Eduard Vinyamata as his delegate to move forward the Campus for Peace project. Back then we already knew that offering a university education via the Internet was possible and that we were ready to put the university and its virtual campus at the service of peace, cooperation, sustainability and conflict resolution; to make the scientific and technological knowledge that we generated available to people and societies, especially those excluded from welfare and progress, from social justice, from the most basic human rights and from freedom.

The world was enmeshed in crisis before today's global economic crisis. Wars, genocide, climate change, epidemics and pandemics, child mortality... As an example, according to UNICEF, every day 30,000 children under the age of five die from poverty, and hence somehow from ignorance. This is equivalent to 132 airbuses crashing every 24 hours, just like the one full of children that crashed into the Atlantic this year. Seventy percent of these children die from malnutrition or from diseases and infections that are easily treatable in the First World. Almost one decade later, the UOC's Campus for Peace is conducting cooperation and development activities and has made virtual education a tool for solving real, specific humanitarian problems. It accomplishes this using a pragmatic approach and in direct contact with universities, NGOs and local public administrations. It is a concept of cooperation that includes listening to others' needs and working together to solve problems. Listening and acting in collaboration, never unilaterally. With the Campus for Peace, the UOC demonstrates that ICTs are a hopeful tool for making knowledge available to everyone, and that the new technologies also make possible such an important thing as learning how to share this knowledge.

**Imma Tubella,**  
President of the Open University of Catalonia

“The goal is to offer training to solve real, specific humanitarian problems, live healthily, coexist peacefully and ensure that the fundamental rights are respected”, Vinyamata underscores. Good examples of this are the course on emergency nutrition; the course on natural birth taught in Peru, where the mother’s

The model of the Campus for Peace has been recognised by the Global University Network for Innovation, that value its public service efforts

improper posture when giving birth is one of the causes of stillborn; and the project that aims to train peasant families in Paraguay, Bolivia and other Latin American countries.

Even though the Campus’ main activity is education, its goal is to become a network of services helping NGOs and humanitarian staff, an interactive virtual space that covers all the information, services and contacts that might be useful. The future projects include creating a bank of information on subsidies or ethical investment funds; a virtual hospital that gathers resources on emergency medicine; and a school that opens the gateway to education and knowledge by providing literacy tools in a variety of languages.

#### Outstanding partners

The courses offered in the UOC’s Area of Humanitarian Cooperation, Peace and Sustainability are also governed by humanitarian criteria. It offers both official programmes and university extension courses. Some are in-house, such as Conflictology, digital training and training virtual trainers, but many of them are taught in conjunction with other entities, institutions, NGOs and universities, which supply their knowledge and

The Area of Cooperation offers both official programmes and university extension courses

teaching materials and take advantage of the UOC’s technological platform and educational method.

The official programmes – postgraduate courses and Master’s – are taught from the International Graduate Institute and they encompass programmes on Humanitarian Action, Dependency, Conflictology, Engineering

Applied to Cooperation, Management of Non Profit Entities and International Humanitarian Law. The university extension courses are conducted from the Campus and financed jointly by the UOC and the entities promoting them with the goal of their being free of charge or extremely economical. In 2008, 84 of these extension courses were offered, and another 42 until May 2009.

The range of organisations that work with the UOC is quite extensive and diverse. The Spanish Red Cross was the first to use the UOC’s virtual training platform, followed by Engineering Without Borders and UNICEF. Amnesty International, Fair Tourism and the Catalan Federation of Social Volunteers, which encompasses 45 social work organisations, all offer virtual training through the UOC.

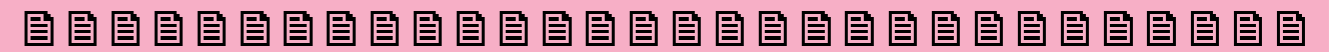
The Campus also works with organisations from third countries, with which it conducts training in a variety of fields ranging from social volunteerism and first aid to energy supply projects in rural settings. One example is the Alianza ONG, an initiative of the

The goal is to become a network of services helping NGOs and humanitarian staff

University of Michigan that serves as an umbrella for civil society organisations in the Caribbean and Latin America. Another is the Universitat Paz Urbana (UPU) project being conducted with the Ecuadorian organisation Ser Paz to train gang members to encourage them to abandon their weapons.

The agreements also extend to other universities, with which literacy and development projects are conducted in response to specific humanitarian problems. Through the UniMinuto University in Bogotá, for example, up to 80,000 Colombian women are trained in issues aimed at improving their living conditions: nutrition, hygiene, workplace training or defending their rights as individuals. This year the Campus has also reached an ambitious agreement with the African Virtual University, which includes around 50 universities around the continent, with the twofold goal of overcoming poverty and resolving conflicts.

The Provincial Council of Barcelona and the Municipality of Cuautitlán Izcalli, Mexico, are two governmental organisations that have also used the Campus for Peace platform. In 2008, the Provincial Council trained 241 people in its Leadership from a Gender →



# Campus for Peace courses

#### In-house

Teaching Virtually  
Author Training for the Virtual Cooperation School

#### With Red Cross

Managing Volunteers  
First Aid  
Training in International Cooperation  
Exploring International Humanitarian Law  
Employment for Vulnerable Groups  
Labour Intermediation for Vulnerable Groups  
Logical Framework Approach to International Cooperation  
Basic Care Workers for the Elderly  
Planning Social Projects  
Social Skills  
Social Intervention and Prostitution  
Managing Diversity in Business  
Group Work

#### With Engineering Without Borders

Energy Supply Projects in Rural Areas  
Volunteering, Cooperation and Technology for Human Development

#### With Amnesty International

Education for Citizenship and Human Rights

#### With the Cuautitlán Izcalli Municipality

Postgraduate course in Peaceful Coexistence and Development of Municipal Life

#### With Eco-union

Urban Ecology and Climate Change  
Sustainable Urban Mobility  
Bioconstruction and Sustainable Materials  
New Culture and Sustainable Water Management

#### With Ecoserveis

Energy efficiency and renewable energies.  
Household responses to climate change  
Biofuels and Sustainability  
Antinuclear Activism

#### With Gaia Education

Design for Sustainability

#### With Gaia Tasiri

Introduction to Permaculture

#### With the Observatory of Barcelona Provincial Council

Decentralised Cooperation

#### With Barcelona Provincial Council

Leadership from a Gender Perspective course

#### With Turismo Justo

Responsible Tourism: Development Cooperation

#### With the WTO–Themis

Tourism and International Development Cooperation

#### With the Catalan Federation of Social Volunteers

Basic Course in Social Volunteering

#### With Alianza ONG

Postgraduate course in Marketing Management and New Information Technologies in Non-Profit Social Organisations

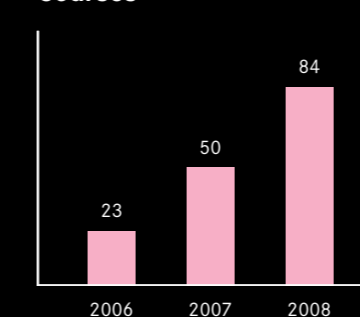
#### With Project UPU

First Aid

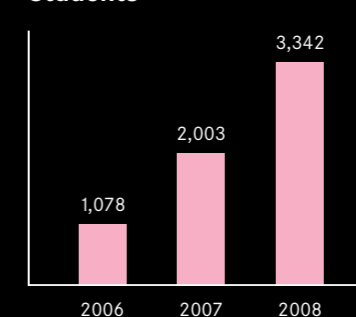
Courses taught in 2008, in Catalan, Spanish and/or English.

## + courses, + students, + entities

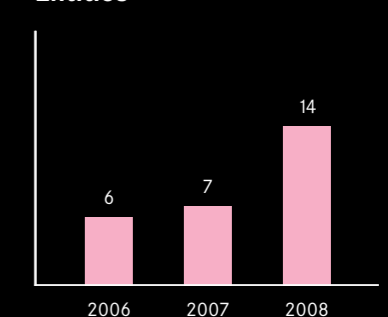
Courses



Students



Entities



## Understanding Africa

In 2009, the NGO Friends for the Development of Black Africa (ADANE) held a virtual course called Understanding Africa in conjunction with the Campus for Peace. This course, which lasted three months, deepened participants' knowledge of African societies, their cultural specificities, how the continent fits within the world economy and its main health problems.

[www.adane.org](http://www.adane.org)

## Coming soon... World Scout Bureau

The scout movement encompasses 28 million people in 160 different countries. In order to disseminate the principles of scouting, the World Scout Bureau of the Scout Movement has chosen the Campus for Peace platform to offer online the classes it is currently offering in a classroom setting. These include modules on nature, peace and commitment to one's community, be it neighbourhood, city or country. The World Bureau has prepared educational materials with scouting leaders in mind, but the course is open to anyone interested. The course will be taught in English and Spanish and aims to become an official Master's. The first step will be taken in November 2009; 20 students from the scout movement are preparing to serve as consultants by pursuing the course on training for virtual trainers at the Campus for Peace.

[www.scout.org](http://www.scout.org)

Perspective course and 98 in its Decentralised Cooperation course, which it taught through its Observatory. The Cuautitlán Izcalli Municipality offers its workers a postgraduate course in Peaceful Coexistence and Development of Municipal Life. In conjunction with the L'Hospitalet de Llobregat Municipality and the La Caixa Foundation, in autumn 2009 a virtual training project is being launched targeted at the population with the highest risk of exclusion in the Collblanc-La Torrassa neighbourhood.

With regard to sustainability and the environment, the Campus for Peace has different partners: Eco-union, an association of professionals that offers applied ecology services; EcoServeis, a non profit entity made up of engineers and other environmental professionals; Gaia Education, an international consortium of ecovillage educators; the Slow Food Movement; the ONG Turismo Justo, and others.

### + info:

#### Red Cross

[www.cruzroja.es](http://www.cruzroja.es)

#### Engineering without Borders

[www.catalunya.isf.es](http://www.catalunya.isf.es)

#### Amnesty International

[www.es.amnesty.org](http://www.es.amnesty.org)

#### Fair Tourism

[www.turismojusto.org](http://www.turismojusto.org)

#### Catalan Federation of Social Volunteers

[www.federacio.net/ca/](http://www.federacio.net/ca/)

#### Alianza ONG

[www.wdi.umich.edu/ResearchInitiatives/SocialEnterprise/AlianzaONG](http://www.wdi.umich.edu/ResearchInitiatives/SocialEnterprise/AlianzaONG)

#### UniMinuto University

[www.portal.uniminuto.edu](http://www.portal.uniminuto.edu)

#### African Virtual University

[www.avu.org](http://www.avu.org)

#### Barcelona Provincial Council

[www.diba.es](http://www.diba.es)

#### Observatory of the Barcelona Provincial Council

[www.observ-ocd.org/Equipo.asp](http://www.observ-ocd.org/Equipo.asp)

#### Cuautitlán Izcalli Municipality

[www.cizcalli.gob.mx/int\\_v3/layout.php](http://www.cizcalli.gob.mx/int_v3/layout.php)

#### Eco-union

[www.eco-union.org](http://www.eco-union.org)

#### Ecoserveis

[www.ecoserveis.net](http://www.ecoserveis.net)

#### Gaia Education

[www.gaiaeducation.org](http://www.gaiaeducation.org)

## Collblanc-La Torrassa: Learning to live together peacefully

Virtual training can contribute to improving the living conditions of people at social risk. This is the starting point of the Comprehensive Training Programme called Learning to Live Together Peacefully that the Municipality of L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Obra Social of La Caixa and the UOC have launched in the Collblanc-La Torrassa district. "The goal is to provide them with tools to handle their own problems and teach them how to take advantage of the social and educational resources available to them", explains Carme Benito, head of the Office of Comprehensive Plans of L'Hospitalet de Llobregat.

The project is being conducted in three phases. It targets highly specific populations, such as women and young adults who are having a hard time entering the job market, the elderly and immigrants. In the first stage, a sociological study was performed to analyse the needs of the most disadvantaged groups in realms like peaceful coexistence, knowledge of Catalan and Spanish, access to the labour market and the use of the social resources available. In the second stage, the UOC coordinated the process of authoring and producing the educational materials.

The third stage, the training itself, got off the ground

in autumn 2009. A total of almost ten courses which last between 75 and 150 hours each are offered via the UOC's platform. Taught in both Catalan and Spanish, they focus on digital training and public services. There are also other courses offered online, such as a course on conflict resolution at school, practical guides on self-employment and training and job placement for adults, handbooks on how to find a home, a course on citizens' basic rights or on citizens' relationship with the public administration, and a module on Catalan language and culture that was developed in conjunction with the Consortium for Linguistic Normalisation of the Catalan government. The purpose is to strengthen the social fabric and train the residents of this neighbourhood to make the most of the resources existing on the Internet. The training takes place in an occupational centre in the district equipped with computers so that individuals who do not own a computer can take the digital self-learning courses without any problems. The students have virtual lecturers as well as in-person monitors who help them learn how to navigate the world of ICTs.

L'Hospitalet de Llobregat:  
[www.l-h.es](http://www.l-h.es)

### Morocco: Digital literacy and methodology transfer

The UOC has conducted a literacy and learning methodology transfer project aimed at introducing ICTs into education in Morocco. This project, which lasted three years, got off the ground in 2005 with the Abdelmalek Saadi University in Tetouan. Around 50 university lecturers were trained through distance learning, along with non-administrative teaching staff.

Abdelmalek Saadi University:

[www.uae.ma](http://www.uae.ma)

### Dominican Republic: Strengthening civil society

In 2007 the Campus for Peace, in conjunction with Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM) in the Dominican Republic, launched the "Live, Coexist and Survive" project, whose goal is to strengthen local civil society. The project includes the design of customised virtual courses in fields like literacy, health and peaceful coexistence targeted at two different groups: lecturers and the marginalised or at-risk population. / Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra:

[www.pucmm.edu.do](http://www.pucmm.edu.do)

## A campus for peace in Africa

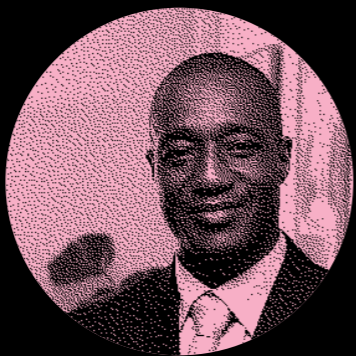
The UOC will create a virtual African campus with the African Virtual University (AVU). The main goal is to offer virtual training in French and English that contributes to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the eradication of poverty, as well as to literacy in the most important African languages and improvements in the living conditions of the most disadvantaged populations.

The framework cooperation agreement, which was signed in Dakar (Senegal) last May by the heads of both universities, Imma Tubella and Bakary Diallo, is quite extensive and includes training in university management, training in managing micro-credits, a post-conflict recovery programme, programmes on digital skills and on African languages, and exchanges of teaching materials. The creation of teaching materials will be reinforced by teacher training in all the African countries where the AVU has associated universities or agreements with NGOs. Mainly African teachers will provide the contents of the virtual training programmes. The AVU, which was founded in 1997 as a World Bank project, is now a pan-African intergovernmental organisation headquartered in Nairobi. It is present in around 50 universities, has 53 centres in 27 countries and has trained 40,000 students. In its 12 years of existence, it has amassed the most important network of open distance and e-learning (ODeL) institutions in Africa. Its mission is to raise access to quality education in Africa through the use of the new technologies and thus overcome the enormous obstacles facing higher education there.

### + info:

**African Virtual University**  
[www.avu.org](http://www.avu.org)

**eLearning Africa**  
[www.elearning-africa.com](http://www.elearning-africa.com)



## “Peace depends on knowledge”

**Bakary Diallo,**  
Rector of the African Virtual University (AVU)

### What is the AVU and why was it created?

It was founded in 1997 as a World Bank project managed from Washington. Now we are a pan-African intergovernmental organisation. Our mission is to facilitate an effective use of open distance and e-learning methodologies in African higher education.

### What do ICTs bring?

Africa has one of the lowest rates of higher education graduates, and one of the most important obstacles is the lack of room at universities. ICTs offer an alternative to building a campus, and universities can use them to improve teaching overall.

### What are the obstacles?

There are many. The first challenge is the infrastructures, which are quite unreliable, and this affects the Internet and other telecommunications. We are not a wealthy continent and not all families have a computer at home, and the universities' resources are also limited. Nor do we have enough lecturers qualified to teach e-learning, and many contents are not yet available in the electronic format.

### What is the relationship between peace and education?

You could say that education is expensive, but what is more expensive is the price of African ignorance. Peace depends on knowledge. Peace-building is very important, and that's why we have a special programme on peace-building in Africa, in countries like Kenya and Somalia.

By Lali Sandiumenge

## Sport, social coexistence and conflict resolution

# The UNESCO-FC Barcelona Foundation-UOC Chair

UNESCO, the Futbol Club Barcelona Foundation and the UOC are working together to create a UNESCO Chair devoted to the training, research and dissemination of sports as a tool for social integration, conflict resolution and promoting peace.

This project, which receives support from UNESCO, aims to offer both virtual and classroom courses for trainers involved in the world of sports who work with groups at social risk and to hold sports events to put what is learned into practice. Other goals include holding international congresses and seminars to study the best practices related to the use of sports for conflict resolution and improving community life and disseminating the recommendations and experience acquired, as well as creating a public database. The many additional impacts of the Chair will be to promote gender equality, a reduction in poverty, digital training and access to knowledge.

“The UNESCO-FCB-UOC Chair is a great opportunity for the FCB Foundation to convey sports' vast potential to reach all children in the world, as well as young adults in situations of vulnerability,” stresses the General Manager of the Foundation, Marta Segú. “We have seen this in both our own programmes and in cooperation experiences with the United Nations, and we want this message to reach everyone through the Unesco Chair in conjunction with such a prestigious university as the UOC”.

The project is grounded on the experience of the FCB Foundation and the UOC in the realm of cooperation. In the Sports and Citizenship programme, the Foundation brings together all the actions aimed at applying sports' vast potential for education and social inclusion to promoting civic values and the defense of human rights. Plus, it has also created the International Network of Solidarity Centres (XICS), extracurricular centres set up on four continents where sports are not the ultimate goal, rather a tool for promoting

social integration, development and the transmission of values among the most vulnerable children. The attraction of play and sports, coupled with the image of the FCB all over the world, makes it possible to attract these children to the centre and offer them free-time activities and comprehensive support in areas like education and healthcare, which in turn lowers their



risk of social exclusion. The Foundation also organises Solidarity Sports Days, a course with the aim of training educators in the use of sports as a tool for education and social integration.

The UOC in turn brings its experience as a benchmark online university, which it has acquired with the Unesco Chair in E-Learning and the wide range of social and humanitarian programmes that the Campus for Peace promotes all over the world.

+ info:  
[www.fcbarcelona.cat/web/fundacio](http://www.fcbarcelona.cat/web/fundacio)  
[www.youtube.com/user/fcbarcelona](http://www.youtube.com/user/fcbarcelona)



# The Red Cross online

This humanitarian organisation strengthens its collaboration with the UOC

2

Virtual School of Cooperation



At the turn of the millennium, in 2000 the Spanish Red Cross embarked on what would become a fruitful relationship with the UOC thanks to a range of online training programmes that has become consolidated in a little less than a decade.

At that time, the Red Cross' Training Department had no online courses, as its traditional training was purely classroom-driven with training centres in all the provincial capitals and numerous towns around Spain. "We saw that the Internet was opening up a new realm of training, and we believed that the Red Cross could not be left behind. What we have done is open up a new methodology", claims Juan Antonio García Niño, distance training coordinator at the Spanish Red Cross.

The importance of the agreement is directly proportional to the importance of this entity within the Spanish social system. The Red Cross has more than 800 local offices scattered all around Spain, plus a team 175,000 people strong – including both professionals and volunteers – and thousands of projects in such

The importance of the agreement is directly proportional to the weight of this entity within the Spanish social system

diverse fields as disabled persons, immigration and international cooperation.

The agreement with the UOC got off the ground through a series of strategic avenues: the creation of a Red Cross campus, its own course on first aid, a multimedia workshop on preventing accidents that was available online, and virtual training of trainers. Almost one decade later, with the exception of the campus, which ended up becoming part of the UOC, the remaining initiatives are not only still underway but also undergoing constant growth. That single course on first aid has now been joined by 13 others.

The range of courses started expanding in 2004 in the second phase of cooperation which came to include official training programmes (Master's, postgraduate courses and specialisations). In the case of the Red Cross' own in-house courses, the entity itself organises them with its own materials and teachers, while the UOC provides its platform and is in charge of registering the students. In contrast, the official training programmes depend on the International Graduate Institute because as academic degrees they must be reviewed by the university. For this reason, a model →



## A decade of commitment

One decade ago, the UOC decided to extend its virtual education to a necessary but often overlooked field in universities: social and sustainable education that is committed to the Third World. Time has proven us right. Today, the International Graduate Institute's Area of Humanitarian Cooperation, Peace and Sustainability has the third highest number of students at the UOC. And that's not all: it is also one of the most international areas: half the students enrolled in our courses are foreigners, most of them from Latin America. The success of the demand and the prestige that this department has earned are largely due to the academic leadership and reputation of Eduard Vinyamata, as well as to the fact that our methodology and course offerings truly reach the public we are targeting. Our students are professionals who work in humanitarian organisations or supranational organisations that depend on the UN. They also include politicians, mayors and town councillors, in areas of conflict needing special support. Another key to our success is that we are not alone in this venture. The majority of our educational products have been developed together with other institutions or custom-designed to meet their training needs. The Red Cross, Engineering Without Borders, Gaia Education and UNITAR are just some of our partners. All of these factors have given us our own style as a university. We are the spearhead of the kind of social and sustainable education that we wanted to do, not just with words but especially with deeds.

**Josep Mª Duart**, Vice President of Postgraduate Studies and Lifelong Learning at the UOC

## More than 2,000 students

Throughout 2008, a total of 2,123 students registered in one of the 54 courses offered by the Red Cross in conjunction with the Campus for Peace. Of these students, 70% were internal – Red Cross volunteers and workers – while the other 30% were external, that is, people without any ties to the organisation. The majority of the students were from Spain, but they also included Latin Americans.

Of the courses targeted at outside students, the most successful ones were First Aid (257 students) and the Logical Framework Approach to International Cooperation (299 students), the latter an analytical method for project planning and management. The course most often taken by internal staff was Basic Training in International Cooperation (286 students). Managing Volunteers (61 students) stands out as an innovative course, in this case addressed to the members of the different national Red Cross and Red Crescent branches around the world; the course is taught in English.

## Library of the Virtual School of Cooperation

The library of the Campus for Peace makes publications and free resources available to everyone free of charge. The main subjects are living, peaceful coexistence and surviving, targeted at individuals and groups in critical, marginal or dangerous situations. The range of subjects is extensive: natural birth, to prevent the death of newborns during birth; emergency nutrition, to prevent malnutrition and the problems derived from it; emergency horticulture, to prevent people from dying from starvation where there is no food; studying for free on the Internet; first aid; defending oneself non-violently and earning respect; and many other subjects. [www.campusforpeace.org](http://www.campusforpeace.org)

is used in which the Red Cross provides the contents, trainers and tutors while the UOC supplies the management, with the exception of the tutorials.

Currently, the range of official training programmes includes four Master's (Project Cycle Management and Humanitarian Action, International Humanitarian Law and International Criminal Justice, Online Management and Resources for Dependent Persons, and Management and Administration of Non Profit Entities). Four postgraduate courses and several specialisation courses are derived from these Master's, in addition to seven course/workshops. "This new avenue is very important and strategic for the Red Cross", Garcia Niño emphasises.

The Red Cross' virtual training is centred at the entity's headquarters and is backed by the professional team in Madrid and the project coordination by the staff in Barcelona. From there, the different courses

Virtual training has enabled the Red Cross to train people from different places in a single course, which would have been impossible with classroom courses

are offered on the Internet (regardless of whether their target audience is Red Cross volunteers or the public at large). Courses are also prepared for specific, specialised geographic areas, another of the advantages afforded by the web. "Distance training serves to cover some training projects that could not be offered locally", says Garcia Niño. All the courses that are offered are made available at the different Red Cross offices around the country so they can use them as they best see fit.

Because of the atomisation of students around Spain, virtual training has enabled the Red Cross to train people from different places in a single course, which would have been impossible with classroom courses. Despite the advantages, for certain training actions the Red Cross still prefers the blended learning model in which the virtual learning is complemented by practical sessions that take place in a physical environment.

The collaboration with the UOC has generated many courses, but the Red Cross still continues to expand the range. All told around ten new courses are in the works, like one for non-professional caregivers, one blended learning course on training immediate emergency response units targeted to its own staff, and one online course in Spanish for immigrants.

## ★ MASTER'S IN DEPENDENCY

### An option with a future

One of the training programmes offered by the Red Cross and the UOC is the Master's in **Online Management and Resources for Dependent Persons**, which is closely tied to the Spanish Law to promote the personal autonomy and care of dependent people, known as the 'law on dependency', approved in 2006. This regulation recognises citizens' right to receive care from the state when they cannot fend for themselves. The Red Cross prepared the Master's as the law was in the offing, aware that this initiative and the social and demographic changes would up the demand for services. Throughout the past 30 years, the number of people over the age of 65 has doubled in Spain. According to official calculations, in 2006 more than half a million people were dependent to some degree.

The budgetary and practical problems involved in enforcing the law have shaped the Master's, which got off the ground in October 2007. "There are few people registered in the different specialities, postgraduate courses and Master's right now", acknowledges Anna Vila, tutor and coordinator of the Master's. The programmes take the law into account, but they also encompass other factors such as facilities management and new technologies.

The range of training courses is targeted at social service professionals. The profile of students is typically women aged 25 to 35, who work in public administration or services directly or indirectly related to the Dependency Law. This kind of professional will be increasingly necessary in the future. For this reason, the heads of the course primarily see it as a viable option for the middle term. "It is a Master's for the future", states Vila, "inasmuch as the law's period of enforcement extends until 2015 and envisages gradual changes, and inasmuch as we are capable of adapting them into the structure of the programme and the need for lifelong learning in this sector is recognised."

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



## Educating in Human rights

Sixty years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a lot still remains to be done, including the presence of education in human rights in higher education. According to Amnesty International (AI), more than one million Spanish university students have no access to any compulsory course on this subject. For years AI has advocated on the need to train teachers in the values of human rights. In the report *Spanish Universities, Trailing behind Europe in Compulsory Training in Human Rights*, issued in April 2008, the organisation condemned the fact that future teachers are not furnished with the theoretical contents or teaching methodology for properly teaching the course of Education for Citizenship and Human Rights introduced recently by the Spanish law on education. The **Education for Citizenship and Human Rights Course** which is conducting with the Campus for Peace, aims to fill this void. AI provides its proven experience in the struggle for human rights and the UOC its own experience in online higher education. The goal is to train primary, secondary and baccalaureate teachers, as well as to target anyone interested in human rights and their dissemination. The course lasts 30 hours.

### + info:

**Amnesty International**  
[www.es.amnesty.org](http://www.es.amnesty.org)

**Education for Citizenship and Human Rights Course**  
[www.uoc.edu/web/cat/launiversitat/estudis/curso\\_educacion/curs\\_educacion.htm](http://www.uoc.edu/web/cat/launiversitat/estudis/curso_educacion/curs_educacion.htm)



# “Virtual education is a clear alternative to classroom learning”



**Pablo Navajo, Director of Training at the Spanish Red Cross**

By Jordi Rovira

Pablo Navajo holds a degree in Psychology and is an expert in project planning and volunteer management. He joined the Spanish Red Cross as a volunteer and began to work for the organisation in a professional capacity in 1986. Since 2000, he has been working closely with the UOC's Campus for Peace coordinating different Master's and postgraduate courses, as well as teaching and developing educational materials.

## **A decade after beginning to work with the UOC, where are we?**

Throughout this time, we've felt very comfortable with the UOC because we have approached all the projects as partners instead of viewing it as a customer-supplier relationship. We have provided knowledge in the field of NGOs, while the university has supplied its platform and experience in technological development and e-learning. We had no experience in this area, and we now have a team that works very smoothly.

## **How have the virtual courses evolved?**

We're very surprised. When we began we only had one course on first aid. Between then and now online training has come to be seen clearly as the pathway of the future. The focus in the next few years will be on blended learning, but today one of the strategic goals is to foster the virtual side with the model that we use with the UOC.

## **Many Red Cross members are volunteers. Does this sort of person really need to master the new technologies?**

It is fundamental, even more so in today's model of volunteerism. We have seen that the volunteers have less and less free time because we are competing with many other free-time activities. We have to cut back the educational processes; we can't make them as lengthy as they used to be. For this reason, it is essential to combine experience as a volunteer worker with online training, which enables us to conduct a kind of learning that is very well adapted to their activities and the amount of free time they have available.

## **Has the culture of immediacy brought about by the appearance of ICTs affected your training?**

When the new technologies emerged it seemed like they were going to free up time for us, but the opposite has happened because what they have done is enslaved us. And in the field of education, it's not good to be in a hurry. What is important is that the training be closely linked to practice, because in the majority of cases we are talking about adults whose top priority is not studying but doing other activities. It has to be very practical; if not, it doesn't work. In this sense, virtual training offers interactivity among students; that is, they share knowledge and experiences, and a "learning community" is created. And sometimes this knowledge is better than the materials we can offer them. This is something that only happens in online training.

## **Has this affected the process of developing the courses?**

Yes, certainly. So much that before there used to be classroom courses whose materials were adapted to the online courses, and now it's the opposite: the virtual course is developed before the classroom course.

## **What is the profile of your students?**

It is quite variable, but in theory we are not talking about older people, where there is still a digital breach, rather young volunteers between the ages of 28 and 30, and middle-aged people. There are also volunteers who don't live in the provincial capital, people who can pursue online training from a rural setting. In terms of the external training [addressed to people who neither work nor volunteer with the Red Cross], we have students from practically all over the world and of all ages.

## **Had you considered the fact that online you could reinforce the network which is scattered about the geography?**

I don't think that anyone could have imagined at first how all of this was going to turn out. In 2000, the course on first aid was planned only for external people, and it wasn't until three years later that we realised that it could also help our members. We hadn't even considered the question of 'learning communities'. Initially, we had the notion that nothing could replace classroom learning, as we thought it was higher quality. But we've seen that we can have virtual training that is considerably higher quality than classroom learning. A student in a 40-hour online course learns much more than a student in a five-day classroom course with 25 people. What is more, virtual training requires a much greater effort, and this means that the knowledge is consolidated more quickly. In this sense, it has shifted from being a complement to a clear alternative to classroom learning.



## **A special temperament**

The job of the management team, which complements the teaching, consists of providing all the support needed so that the teaching can be conducted as smoothly as possible and furnishing advice on the creation of programmes to ensure their quality. Working in an area like the UOC's Cooperation, Peace and Sustainability is extremely gratifying. Not only do you contribute to a kind of education whose goal is to train people who will help make the world a better place, rather you also engage in contact with altruistic people whose vocation is to help and who are training to become professionals who bring a little optimism to our surroundings, be it the neighbourhood or on the opposite side of the world. Students in this field have a special and highly characteristic temperament, and this can be seen in how they participate in teaching as well as in the personal messages they send to the classroom forums, where they invite their classmates into their personal lives, the trips they take and the non-profit activities in which they lend a hand. Thus, special networks of relationships are forged that lead to the creation of very interesting groups. We work at a virtual university, but every now and then we get to meet the students personally at in-person meetings and events. In these opportunities, we 'play' at guessing which ones are pursuing socially conscious courses. We can often identify them just by the way they deal with others and greet them.

## **Carme Anguera and Mabel Gómez,**

Activity Managers of postgraduate courses at the UOC

## Master's in Project Cycle Management and Humanitarian Action

# Training aid workers

Within the wide range of online educational programmes offered jointly by the Red Cross and the UOC, one of the most popular is the Master's in Project Cycle Management and Humanitarian Action. Created in 2004 initially as a postgraduate course, it is the most sought-after of all the programmes offered at the International Graduate Institute (IIP).

The two-year Master's programme develops a global vision of humanitarian action, its evolution and its concept today. It consists of three parts, namely identification, management and project evaluation, and just like most of the IIP programmes, it is divided into two postgraduate courses, Management of International Cooperation Project Cycles and Humanitarian Action, as well as different specialisations.

The profile of the students is quite diverse, mostly young people who are earning or have already earned their degrees and are seeking more information or another degree. Most are not members of the Red Cross, and they come from different academic and professional fields. The course is targeted at a wide range of people interested in participating in international cooperation projects and humanitarian action, ranging from project technicians, volunteers and public administration employees to graduates in medicine, nursing, social education, agronomy, education and telecommunications engineering, just to name a few.

Academically, there are other similar Master's in international cooperation, but few of them specialise in management. "I've always been interested in cooperation, but I didn't know that there were programmes like this one", says Ana Mato, a Galician native who finished the Master's programme in September 2008. She had no experience in this field, but while she →



Cooperation projects of the Red Cross and Doctors of the World in Sierra Leone © Jordi Rovira

was studying she was awarded a grant from the Xunta of Galicia (regional government) and worked for a year at the Directorate General of Foreign Cooperation and spent a month in Senegal. Mato currently resides in Porto, where she works for the International Relations Service of the city's university. "I work in international cooperation. It's not exactly the same, but through certain educational programmes you can always get a development perspective", she claims.

A similar case is that of Alicja Bradel, who was enrolled in the graduate programme in academic year 2008-2009, after she earned her degree in Social Psychology in Germany, her birthplace. "For years I've

"Working with examples of real projects meant that the training resembled practice more than theory" <Carlos León, Guinea Bissau>

"The experience of the tutors is essential, since the majority of the answers are not written in any handbook" <Alicja Bradel, Burgos>

known that I wanted to work in international cooperation", she says. She currently lives in Burgos, where she is on a grant from the NGO Entreculturas, and she volunteers with the Red Cross in awareness-raising campaigns on education for development.

Carlos León is an example of a student who has been able to apply what he learned in practice. The current Spanish Red Cross representative in Guinea Bissau, where he is developing a water and basic sanitation project, he was enrolled in the postgraduate course in 2005 and still has to complete the second part in order to earn his Master's. Before that, he had worked as a volunteer in Barcelona in the youth section of the Red Cross, and after taking courses on catastrophes and emergencies with the Red Cross he went to work in the Saharawi refugee camps in Tindouf (Algeria) in community health and humanitarian aid projects.

"Being in Tindouf, I realised that if I wanted to work in cooperation I needed more knowledge and tools in order to do a good job", he recalls. Once he finished the postgraduate course he went to Angola with different projects involving community health and combating AIDS, and he was a Red Cross representative there before moving to Guinea Bissau. →

## Master's in International Humanitarian Law

# Protecting war victims

International humanitarian law is an entire set of norms aimed at avoiding the barbarity of war and limiting the effects of armed conflicts on individuals. The educational programme that the Spanish Red Cross and the UOC launched in academic year 2006-2007 consists of a Master's, which is divided into two postgraduate courses – International Humanitarian Law and International Criminal Justice – and four specialisations. The programmes shed light on international law's response to the reality of today's armed conflicts, delve into the victim protection system, examine how the International Criminal Court works and analyse the concept of terrorism. They are targeted at university graduates and professionals interested in participating in international missions or working in NGOs or supra-national organisations.



### The most successful course

The Humanitarian Action programme is the most sought-after of the wide array of courses offered by the UOC's International Graduate Institute. Between 2005 and 2008, 178 students registered for the Master's, 343 took one of the two postgraduate courses and 172 pursued one of the five specialisations.

The goal of the Master's is to examine the methodology of projects conducted by the major international cooperation agencies and approach the contents through practical case studies. The faculty and teaching team are all professionals with extensive experience in the world of cooperation, many of whom work or have worked on the ground. This is the case, just to cite a handful, of Marta Alejano, the former Spanish Red Cross representative in several African countries and Sri Lanka; Enrique Castro, who was in charge of the organisation in the Sahara, Nicaragua and El Salvador; Carmen Isasi in Albania; and Jesús Franco in Kosovo, India and Tanzania.

The students' assessment of the programme is very positive. The success of the Master's, they agree, lies in the fact that the teaching is highly practical; it is useful for both working in an organisation's headquarters and on the ground, and all the educators have plenty of experience in both places.

"The Master's taught me exactly how a project of this kind is created and the steps needed to plan, manage, implement and assess it", claims Ana. "In the planning and formulation module, we had to formulate just

"The Master's enabled me to know exactly how a cooperation project is created and the steps needed to plan, manage, implement and assess it"  
<Ana Mato, Porto>

about an entire project, going through all the phases in the logical framework. I found that very useful", adds Alicja, who stresses that the teachers' experience was necessary in order to answer students' questions and doubts. "The majority of the answers are not written in any handbook".

Carlos, in turn, claims that he has applied many of the concepts and tools he learned in subsequent professional experiences. "The fact that we worked with examples of real projects and the experiences of other representatives meant that the training resembled practice more than theory", he underscores. "One of the major difficulties when you're working on the ground, and the root of many conflicts, is that you don't appreciate what your colleagues at headquarters are doing and vice-versa. The fact that the educators gave an overview of these jobs means that you are aware of the responsibilities and difficulties in both places."



## Instigators of change

Yet another year, we here at Engineering Without Borders continue to advocate on behalf of training through virtual classrooms as part of our action strategy in the realm of education for development. The UOC's educational model is appropriate for the kind of online training we offer, which is grounded in a methodology based on research and participatory action, which fosters the resolution of the tasks that make it possible to generate knowledge from teamwork.

The importance of group activities and debates is worth highlighting, where students from different parts of the world work at a distance in a coordinated, joint fashion, sharing their opinions and exchanging their experiences and lessons learned, thus even further enriching the tool's learning potential.

With the Introduction to Volunteerism course and the Master's in Engineering Applied to Development Cooperation we aim to not only train future professionals in the field of development cooperation and humanitarian aid but also enhance students' capacities as instigators of change so that they participate as active subjects to transform and reverse situations of injustice and inequality in the society in which we live. We strive to train agents who are active in the processes articulated by civil society and committed to the values of solidarity and social justice that make change possible.

**Susana Agüera,**  
Training expert from the Catalan branch of EWB

## Engineering Without Borders

# Science and cooperation

Engineering Without Borders (EWB) is an NGO primarily made up of professionals, educators and students interested in science and its relationship with development. As it says on its website, the experience accumulated over 15 years of work has enabled it to "state that ensuring access to basic services like water and energy contributes directly to making social change possible and to strengthening Southern communities".

EWB works in two different avenues. While in the Southern countries it mainly focuses on development projects, in the North it centres its efforts on education for development. For this reason, it spearheads educational experiences at universities, especially at

Cooperation with the NGO Engineering Without Borders allows to train new development specialists

engineering schools: Master's, postgraduate courses, individual classes and seminars linked to engineering and cooperation.

Its cooperation with the UOC began in 2003, when the first agreement was signed. "At that time it was the university that was the best-prepared to deliver e-learning", recalls Agustí Pérez Foguet, Academic Director of the Center for Development Cooperation at the Polytechnic University of Catalonia and an EWB member. Six years after that first agreement, Pérez Foguet rates the experience as "highly positive".

Currently, the virtual courses being offered include two unofficial online courses and one Master's, which is divided into two postgraduate courses and four specialisation courses. The profile of students that pursue this kind of education includes people who already have an

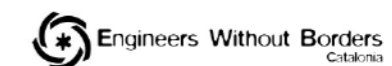
engineering degree (technical or higher) and want to delve into development professionally. Some of them, points out Pérez Foguet, who is the Academic Director of the Master's programme, "are already working in the field of cooperation and want to further their training".

The courses conducted with the Campus for Peace are Energy Supply Projects in Rural Areas and Vol-



unteerism, Cooperation and Technology for Human Development. The third and sixth editions were taught in 2009, respectively.

The Master's in Engineering Applied to Development Cooperation, in turn, is offered by the International Graduate Institute and is in its fourth edition this year. Still, everything is coming to a halt in summer 2009. "We are stepping back a year", says Pérez Foguet, "to reflect on how to adapt the product to the guidelines of the European Higher Education Area and update our materials."



+ info:  
[www.isf.es](http://www.isf.es)  
[www.youtube.com/user/multimedialSF](http://www.youtube.com/user/multimedialSF)

## New International Master's in Conflictology

# Learning how to make peace

3

Conflictology



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8F3S3s87bk&feature=channel](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8F3S3s87bk&feature=channel)

Training in conflict resolution is a field that has grown in demand in just a few years. The first idea it calls to mind is situations involving wars and armed conflicts as they are perhaps the most extreme, but it is a much broader, cross-cutting field that works with everyday interpersonal situations as well, such as in couples, among friends, with colleagues, neighbours or companies.

Conflict resolution is not limited to mediating between two parties when there is a disagreement, although the proliferation of organisations involved in mediation and arbitration has often led it to be confused with this. Mediation is a specific technique that is not always used to make peace, rather conflict resolution also involves preventing, reconstructing and repairing the damage after a conflict.

"Conflicts are with us from the day we're born until the day we die, and it's a good idea to have tools to handle them", claims Roberto Luna, the lecturer of Introduction to Conflictology at the UOC. The many possibilities for applying this discipline are unquestionably the key behind the heavy demand for the different programmes on conflictology available at the UOC's International Graduate Institute, which is offering its first general international Master's in English in academic year 2009-2010. The Master's brings together

"The Master's made me change the way I handle the conflicts that arose in the party; I learned not to provoke but to seek the middle ground to resolve disagreements, and how to put myself in the other person's shoes", recalls Catalan parliamentarian Rafael Luna

the knowledge, systematises it and presents it using an effective, advanced teaching method. It also brings together academicians and practitioners from prestigious universities and peace research institutes in different countries all over the world.

Until now the UOC has offered in Spanish a Master's in Armed Conflicts and Crisis Management, designed for more far-reaching social conflicts, and a Master's in Family and Educational Mediation, the more local, everyday branch of interpersonal conflicts. The English-language Master's includes both branches, and it also encompasses two postgraduate courses that now join the four offered in Spanish. →



2nd Congress on Conflictology / Roberto Luna during his speech [www.youtube.com/watch?v=NzPxxgSqDdA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NzPxxgSqDdA)

Rafel Luna, member of the Catalan Parliament

Eduard Vinyamata, who was the one to bring conflictology studies to the UOC in 1999 and is one of the lecturers in the programme, stresses that the courses particularly focus on the strategic vision which looks beyond the symptoms to work on the roots and origins of the conflicts from a highly practical standpoint. The goal is to avoid theoretical learning and instead offer effective training that prepares students for on-the-ground work. Thus, at the end of the Master's students have to do a final project in which they put what they have learned into practice. "Those who are already working can apply the knowledge in their offices, organisations and institutions, and those who want to switch professional gears can make new contacts that open up new doors for them", Vinyamata explains.

Numerous internationally prestigious institutions are participating in the new English-language Master's, including the University of California in the United States, the University of Bradford in England and the University of Singapore. They are all benchmarks in

"You can find students like an infantry commander in Kosovo, a mayor from Mexico, the director of Engineers Without Borders in a South American country or the secretary at an embassy", says Eduard Vinyamata

the teaching of conflictology, which thanks to the online delivery of the programme will enable students to learn from the top lecturers in the different branches of the discipline from around the world. What is more, this collaboration aims to make the most of the synergies and make itself felt beyond the classrooms through a specialised journal that shares its name with the Master's programme. *Conflictology* comes in a paper version, but it is also available free-of-charge through the Campus for Peace website.

Apart from the Master's and postgraduate courses, the UOC also offers four specialisation courses in Spanish (family and personal conflicts, educational conflicts, social and political conflicts, and armed conflicts and crisis management) and an Introduction to Conflictology. "This specialisation is often the entry point for students who register just to get the most basic concepts and notions, but who end up furthering their studies in one of the other fields", says Roberto Luna. The new programme in English will also include specialisation courses. →

## NEW POSTGRADUATE COURSE

# Conflict management in healthcare organisations

Teaching how to manage conflicts in healthcare organisations is the goal of the new postgraduate course that the IIP is launching in the academic year 2009-2010. It aims to address the problems arising from the pressure to care for patients, unclear protocols or not knowing who does what, medical malpractice and even interpersonal conflicts derived from working together. In this sense, the field of healthcare is fertile ground. "Healthcare norms are increasingly stringent, there is a great deal of pressure on the system and doctors are given few resources," claims Gemma Pons, who co-directs the postgraduate course with Natalia Bernardoni.

Pons and Bernardoni are lawyers, mediators and the authors of a healthcare mediation project in the Catalan healthcare system that was conducted between 2004 and 2008. The postgraduate course on Conflict Management in Healthcare Organisations is the outcome of this experience and is organised into two specialities: the profile of the consultant in healthcare conflicts and the design of methodologies for complex interventions in organisations.

The course addresses several issues specific to the healthcare sector, such as prevention and de-judicializing malpractice and intervention in multi-party and interpersonal conflicts. However, it could be useful in other fields, as well. The curriculum examines a set of indicators that enables conflicts to be detected and eradicated in all kinds of complex organisations, as conflicts always end up translating into economic losses. For this reason, Pons stresses that despite the fact that in theory the students are expected to come from the field of healthcare, "the syllabus could be interesting for people from other sectors who work in large public or private organisations, such as executives or the staff of human resources departments".

The Academic Director of the Area of Conflict Resolution in the UOC's International Graduate Institute, Marta Burguet, notes that the demand for studies in social conflictology is slightly higher than for the branch focusing on interpersonal conflicts. She adds that the more than 500 students who have gained this kind of training in the past ten years have extremely heterogeneous profiles. "There are always exceptions, but the people interested in social conflicts are usually aid workers, soldiers, diplomats, NGO managers or journalists, while lawyers, teachers, psychologists, sociologists and politicians tend to choose the interpersonal facet of conflict resolution."

Rafael Luna is a Catalan parliamentarian and the Secretary of the Mesa (governing body) of the Parliament of Catalonia. He was the Secretary General of the Partido Popular (People's Party) in Catalonia when four years ago he pursued the UOC's first international Master's in Conflict Resolution, which included an overview of the subject that is now being taught in English. He has fond memories of the experience and claims that the knowledge he acquired in conflictology has been very useful. "The Master's made me change the way I analyse and handle the conflicts that arose in the party, and I learned not to provoke but to seek the middle ground in order to resolve disagreements, and how to put myself in the other person's shoes", he recalls.

The average age of students in Conflict Resolution is over 35, and they are usually highly motivated people at a time of transition who have professional experience that they share with their classmates from all over the world through the web. "You can find students like an infantry commander in Kosovo, a mayor from Mexico, the director of Engineers without Borders in a South American country and the secretary at an embassy", says Eduard Vinyamata. Rafael Luna still recalls a classmate from Cádiz from the Comisiones Obreras trade union with whom he smoothed over differences by putting what they had learned into practice.

+ info:  
[www.uoc.edu/masters](http://www.uoc.edu/masters)

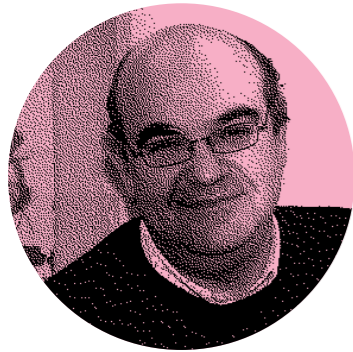


## The evolution of peacemaking

If we look back to the origins of peace research over fifty years ago, intellectual pioneers such as Elise Boulding saw peacemaking as an evolutionary capacity, a process which must be observed across generations. Two broad goals were identified. The first was to identify the conditions for a new world order based on conflict analysis. The second was to mobilize and inspire ever widening and inclusive peace constituencies based on the promotion of the values of non-violent peacemaking. From these goals, it was possible to see the promotion of peace at three levels. Firstly through a radical reformation of world political systems. Secondly through the promotion of an inclusive anti-war and pro-peace politics. Thirdly through moving beyond the politics of protest towards a proactive project that linked peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding in a continuum of activity that limited violence and strengthened the values of peace. The founders of peace research also aligned their thinking not only with the negative goals of preventing war and containing violent conflict, but with the even more challenging task of building positive peace by addressing the attitudinal and structural conditions associated with violent conflict behaviours. Collectively this research agenda did create the beginnings of a paradigm shift, a new way of explaining how violent conflicts were generated, how they sustained themselves and how they could be transformed peacefully. Now the UOC takes on the important challenge of continuing this work of the founders and, more importantly, transforming it to the needs of an electronic age.

**Tom Woodhouse**, Director of the Centre of Conflict Resolution, University of Bradford

# “On-the-ground research saves the victims’ truth”



**Esteban Beltrán,**  
**Director of Amnesty**  
**International in Spain**  
 By Anna Murgadas

Esteban Beltrán is a lecturer of Conflictology at the UOC. He teaches on-the-ground research into human rights violations, a major part of Amnesty International’s daily efforts and one in which Beltrán has personally been involved in countries like Guatemala, Costa Rica and Panama.

### Why is conflict resolution important?

We are living in a time with a policy of many fears, fear of everything that is unknown to us. Conflict resolution is a very powerful and sound weapon for combating these fears.

### How is it used?

Conflict resolution gives us the tools to improve our capacity for dialogue, to put ourselves in someone else’s shoes and to spark empathy. Today there are very few people with these skills.

### How is it linked to human rights?

If human rights are anything, they’re the conflict between civil society and governments, armed groups or enterprises. I teach how to research human rights violations in armed conflicts or when the state is behind the crimes or doesn’t act with due diligence, as often is the case in gender violence.

### And how do you research it?

On-the-ground research means travelling to the specific site to gather information, to see what the sources are, to speak with the governments, with the victims... It is the most reliable kind of research.

### Is this what Amnesty International does?

When we denounce a violation, there has always been a previous inquiry on the ground, such as the one that revealed that Israel was using white phosphorous bombs in Gaza. On-the-ground research saves the victims’ truth and preserves their anonymity.

### What does the field of conflict resolution suggest when a government violates human rights?

Publicly shaming it is a good option, and are the many legal measures as well, such as international treaties and conventions that you can use in court. Another possibility is mobilisation: millions of people have managed to change the lives of victims of human rights violations through massive mobilisations via the Internet.

## Virtual European Research Centre in Conflictology (VERCIC)

Basic, theoretical and applied research into conflictology, conflict resolution, the culture of peace, peaceful coexistence and solving social problems. An international network of the top professionals and experts in resolving and transforming conflicts in all areas of application, which works on UOC programmes and in alliances with international bodies, other universities and NGOs around the world.

NEW MASTER'S

# Master in Conflictology

UOC, International Graduate Institute

### Courses

#### Postgraduate course in Armed Conflicts and Crisis Management

Specialisation in Crisis Management

- Introduction to Conflictology
- Philosophy of Peace
- United Nations Peace Operations
- Media and Peace Building

Specialisation in Armed Conflicts

- Introduction to Conflictology
- Economy and Conflict
- Trends in modern armed conflicts and organised armed violence
- Deconstructing War

Armed conflicts and crisis management postgraduate project

#### Postgraduate course in Societal and Business Conflicts

Specialisation in Social and Family Conflicts

- Introduction to Conflictology
- Understanding and Managing Social Conflicts
- Intercultural Conflict and Diversity Management
- Family Mediation

Specialisation in Workplace and Commercial Conflicts

- Introduction to Conflictology
- Business Mediation
- Conflict Resolution in Organisations

Societal and business conflicts postgraduate project

Master project

The efforts made by humankind to live in peace give us insight to accomplish real results, eliminate war, transform conflicts and manage them positively.

Conflict resolution, transformation, mediation and management studies and culture of peace are synonyms and they describe the scientific and multi-disciplinary approach of conflictology.

This Master’s course draws from this insight, systematises knowledge and presents it in an advanced and efficient educational manner and trains students in all applications of conflictology: family, trade, social, political, international and armed conflicts.

Practitioners and academics from prestigious universities and peace research institutes from different countries around the world get together with the UOC in this virtual course.

**Teaching Staff: Ian MacDuff, James South, Tina Monberg, Brigitte Kehrer, Eric George, Tom Woodhouse, Tica Font, Jake Lynch, Ekaterina Stepanova, Michael Schneider, Roberto Luna, Alejandro Pozo. Academic management: Nicole Jenne, Eduard Vinyamata**

With the collaboration of Centre for effective Dispute (UK), California State University, Universitat Jaume I, Bradford University (UK), Singapore University, Stockholm International Peace Institute (SIPRI), Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division, International Mediation Institute, Sidney University.



Start: 28 October, 2009  
 Duration: 2 years  
 Language: English  
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[www.uoc.edu/masters](http://www.uoc.edu/masters)

# “Gangs are wars in the hands of young men and boys”



**Nelsa Curbelo,**  
President of Ser Paz  
By Jordi Rovira

Nelsa Curbelo holds degrees in Theology and Education, as well as a title in Mediation from Harvard University. She is a lecturer of the UOC's Conflictology course. Born in Uruguay, this educator and human rights activist is the President of the Ecuadorian organisation Ser Paz, which has been working with high-risk young adults since 1999, especially gang members. She was a Nobel Peace prize nominee in 2005.

## What are the fears leading young men to join a gang?

The majority join out of curiosity more than fear, although there are neighbourhoods where if you don't belong to a gang you're unsafe because you're alone. And not belonging to any group requires a lot of guts. Therefore, they choose to join. This happens in lots of schools, too.

## How would you rate Ser Paz's actions since it was founded?

I prefer others to rate us on our successes and failures. Gangs are wars in the hands of young men and boys. The day our organisation is truly effective, there will be no need for us because it will mean that there are no more gangs in the sense of groups that use violence as a bond of communication.

## You worked as a conflict mediator in a dozen different countries between 1984 and 1992. What conclusions did you reach?

I don't remember how many conflicts I was involved in, but what I do know is that regardless of how many, they are all rooted in problems involving interpersonal relations and power. The opposite of violence is power, and not non-violence. People, groups, organisations, countries, companies that are sure of themselves have no fear of others; they seek bonds and agreements. Violence is much more a product of fear than of bravery. Whoever is sure of themselves and of others has no need to stand in opposition or fight. All they have to do is try to understand each other, even if this takes time.

## You've been in Barcelona as a consultant on gangs. What are the main differences between Latin American and Spanish gangs?

The context. The young men in the gangs – or marginal urban groups of young adults, as we call them – in Spain and Ecuador have different perceptions and behaviours because they live in different societies. The banana tree is an edible plant in Ecuador, while in France it's merely ornamental. It's the same plant, but it does not behave the same because the soil and climate are different. Despite the obvious differences, the same holds true of human beings.

## Are the solutions the same even though the context is different?

There are no prescriptions. However, there are general guidelines and approaches which can serve as a model of what to do and particularly what not to do. Each society has to learn to use the tools and then apply them creatively; they have to come up with the right answer to this issue themselves, which will surely have different questions.

## Ser Paz's strategy includes strengthening networks in favour of a culture of peace. How is this put into practice?

We are reinforcing conflict resolution “laboratories”. It is important for gang members to learn how to handle problems, difficulties and clashes using the right tools. The most important part of the networks is that the gang members themselves are the ones who forge contacts among the youngsters and multiply the experiences, that they lead the processes. We mentor them, we guarantee them organisational support and we put limits on them if necessary. But they have to grow and we have to recede. Gangs are actually organised groups

that work very well by themselves in networks. These networks have to be given positive contents.

### + info:

**Ser Paz**  
[www.serpaz.org](http://www.serpaz.org)

**Barrio de Paz (Peace Town)**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ct3JOmat-q4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ct3JOmat-q4)

## Universidad Barrio de Paz: Education as an alternative to violence



More than one million young adults in South America belong to armed and criminal gangs. In September 2008, the Campus for Peace took part in the Barrio de Paz (Peace Town) University pilot programme. It was launched by the NGO Ser Paz in Guayaquil and involved five gangs and one thousand families.

The goal was to reduce violence in the most conflictive zones of the country and provide the young men with resources and training to get them away from the gangs and integrate them into society. The UOC set up and equipped classrooms for courses – virtual and free-of-charge – and Ser Paz provided training in digital literacy, first aid and graphic design with the aid of teachers from the Ecuadorian Red Cross and volunteer teacher consultants. The programme also helped the youngsters secure micro-credits and launch their



own businesses. Some micro-companies have already been started, such as a rap music label and a pizzeria. The initiative, which has involved members of previously rival gangs, has helped to lower the number of crimes in a centrally-located neighbourhood in Guayaquil by 60%. The success of this project, focused on training as an alternative to police repression, has already sparked the interest of other Latin American countries. In the future, the goal is to multiply the number of 'peace towns', as well as to set up the Universidad Paz Urbana (Urban Peace University, UPU) which emerged in Guatemala in 2007 as part of a congress that analysed urban conflicts. The idea is to promote a class on digital literacy and reach agreements with the UOC so that young adults can earn their degrees at a distance.

## A tension-free cafe

“At first I had to find out what gangs really are and what it means to be a member of one”. Beatriz Seisdedos, currently the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Colombia and former student in the Master’s in Conflictology at the UOC, spent a month and a half in the autumn of 2008 working as a volunteer in the programme to help young gang members rejoin society, which was organised by Ser Paz in a neighbourhood in Guayaquil. “The most impressive thing,” she recalls, “was mentoring the process of using non-violent ways to resolve a conflict between gangs. It was led by the gang members themselves and was very similar to a peace process between countries, yet led by young men who were keenly aware of the importance of avoiding bloodshed.” The keys to achieving it, she explains, were respect, dialogue and reflection. “Plus, they were offered alternatives, like helping them to finish school and providing them with support to create small businesses.” The programme’s secret to success, she adds, is “having understood that nullifying the concept of gang leads nowhere. What we did was take advantage of the positive aspects of gangs, such as membership and solidarity, and work to ensure that the gang still existed as a protective yet violence-free organisation.” Beatriz recalls how one of the young men told her that one of the best things that had happened to him was being able to sit down in a cafe without having to keep his guard up and his hand on his weapon. “They really value this peace of mind. And they’ve only achieved it in this neighbourhood, because they know that other gangs won’t attack them. It’s a tacit agreement through which they have decided to resolve conflicts peacefully via dialogue.”



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=9H8Oo6MHNWw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9H8Oo6MHNWw)



Beatriz Seisdedos

## International Association of Conflictologists (IAC)

The International Association of Conflictologists was founded in October 2008 at the 2nd International Congress on Conflicts, Conflict Resolution and Peace organised by the Campus for Peace in Barcelona. The association includes Conflictology graduates from all over the world and conflict resolution practitioners with the common goal of promoting conflictology as a new social, non-disciplinary, transversal social science, to disseminate its areas of application and to bring about a true culture of peace.

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## Cuautitlán Municipality Education as an antidote

The Municipality of Cuautitlán Izcalli, a city of 500,000 people in the Mexico City metropolitan area, has decided to fight against problems like crime and corruption through education. In August 2006, this Mexican city launched the Municipal Public University, the first project in the history of this country in which a local government provided resources to create a higher education institution.

The driving force behind the project is David Ulises Guzmán Palma, the Mayor of Cuautitlán, who earned his Master’s in Conflict Management at the UOC. The goal of the university, he explains, is to train specialists

This Mexican Municipality focuses on training specialists who help in solving community problems

who could help to resolve the problems afflicting the community. To accomplish this, that October the university signed an agreement with the UOC to conduct training actions and projects.

The first project was a training course on conflictology, peaceful coexistence and the development of municipal life, which civil servants and social leaders in mediation and conflict resolution took. Through its Campus for Peace, the UOC contributed the tools and equipment needed to launch the project, while the Municipality provided citizens the access to the training programmes through scholarships. That

initial course ended up crystallising into a one-year postgraduate course, Peaceful Coexistence and Development of Municipal Life, which is wholly financed by the Municipality.

According to Guzmán, the goal is to offer training programmes free of charge so that in the long term the city may have specialists who can help to combat organised crime. In this sense, the postgraduate course addresses issues such as conflictology, digital literacy, anti-corruption, education for peace and corporate social responsibility, among others.

The agreement with Cuautitlán is one example of the consolidation of the UOC’s presence in Latin America. In 2004, the university opened an office in Mexico City with the purpose of helping its Mexican students (the Latin American community with the steepest rise), to promote the most consolidated postgraduate courses and to facilitate the relationship to the universities with which it had signed agreements, such as the University of Guadalajara, the University of Veracruz and the School of Banking and Commerce.



## 3rd International Congress Conflicts, Conflict Resolution and Peace

- 1 We bring together the top professionals in conflict management and resolution
- 2 We propose projects and initiatives to promote peaceful coexistence
- 3 We create a space of reflection and we stimulate research
- 4 We promote networks of specialised knowledge
- 5 We spearhead training

Barcelona, 30th of October, 2009. UOC Barcelonès Support Centre, Rambla de Catalunya, 6, 2n. In conjunction with the International Catalan Peace Institute

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# The sustainable university

The UOC is spearheading ecological and environmental education

4  
EcoUniversity  
→

The UOC has expanded its Area of Cooperation with the launch of the EcoUniversity, a transversal project that aims to include all the realms of knowledge that are involved in improving people's living conditions and the planet. This educational project plans to bring together and give academic format to scientific, technological, social, economic and commercial ideas and alternatives in order to conduct society towards social and environmental sustainability.

The EcoUniversity, a pioneering project within the world of virtual education, aims to be a venue for researching and developing practices for social and environmental sustainability, for conveying knowledge, training and learning, for providing technical support and for building the skills and resources needed to implement this knowledge. The fields that this programme encompasses include sustainability and the environment, urban ecology, climate change, energy, the new culture of water, eco-architecture and eco-design, health and bioclimatism, natural therapies

The EcoUniversity is a pioneering project within the world of virtual education

and alternative medicine, ethical banking, ecological economics and corporate social responsibility.

Academically, the project is really getting off the ground in the academic year 2009-2010 with the launch of two new educational areas within the International Graduate Institute: Natural Therapies, which joins the Area of Humanitarian Cooperation, Peace and Sustainability and is being started with the support of the Institute of Health Studies; and Biological Agriculture, which falls within Area of Food Systems, Culture and Society and is being offered in conjunction with the Generalitat de Catalunya's Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Action. Both programmes begin in March as an initial specialisation, but the goal is to expand them to a Master's, two postgraduate courses and several specialisations.

"This is slated to become one of the most comprehensive programmes in biological agriculture and agro-ecology in the Spanish university system. We are trying to offer an open, global vision of everything that goes from the field to the dish, from production to consumption, and of all the repercussions and social implications entailed in this process", stresses F. Xavier Medina, Director of the UOC's Area of Food Systems, Culture and Society. "Virtual learning is an added

value because it enables us to convey knowledge and frees us from the need for presence in the classroom. This might be of particular interest for professionals who cannot otherwise get away from their job or travel to pursue a Master's".

The project is being organised by the Campus for Peace, which is already conducting a variety of initiatives revolving around sustainability and has made its platform and methodology available to entities linked to the environment and sustainability. The Campus

This educational project plans to bring together and give academic format to scientific, technological, social, economic and commercial ideas

works with the associations Eco-Union and Ecoserveis, the NGOs Engineering without Borders and Fair Tourism, and with the PermaCulture Academy, and in the near future it plans to join forces with Natural Step, the international sustainable development organisation, the Waldorf Teacher Training Centre and Fets, a Catalan association that promotes ethical and socially-conscious financing.

The international consortium of ecovillage educators, Gaia Education, was the latest to join and has been offering since 2008 a virtual course in Design for Sustainability taught in English and Spanish, which brings together all the experience in this field accumulated by ecovillages all over the world. "We have discovered a tool with a great deal of potential for students

The project is really getting off the ground in the academic year 2009-2010 with the launch of two new educational areas within the IIP

around the world to interact, exchange experiences and knowledge and work together to develop projects", says the course coordinator, José Luis Escorihuela, 'Ulises', a driving force behind the ecovillage movement. The first year, for example, two directors of UN biosphere reserves in China were trained.

The range of courses will be complemented this autumn by the launch of the first journal in Catalan devoted to this topic, *EcoUniversitat*, and the 2nd EcoUniversity Conference, which will present the project and the lecturers who will teach the courses.

## Master's in Natural Therapies

# A new educational challenge



**By Alfons Vinyals,**  
therapist and coordinator of the Campus  
for Peace's EcoUniversity

Society's interest in so-called 'natural therapies' has risen in Catalonia and other regions in Spain in recent years. The processes underway to regulate the sector coupled with the social and professional movement point to the fact that some specialities need the support of the universities. Taking advantage of all the resources in a Europe whose university reference will increasingly be the Bologna Agreements, setting up a Master's in Natural Therapies within the EcoUniversity is fully coherent with what we could call the spirit of the times. That is, it is something that can be put off no longer.

This Master's is a first step – and it will no doubt become a particular benchmark – towards offering the guarantees that society and professionals are calling

for. It is made up of four modules: Natural health and dietetics; Phytotherapy (knowledge and use of plants); Naturopathic criteria and functional naturopathy (philosophical underpinnings and resources of natural stimuli) and Bioenergetic vibration therapies (the use of certain bioenergetic stimuli as health enhancers).

This is a new educational challenge for the EcoUniversity that involves learning about and mastering the therapeutic skills – in addition to the knowledge and attitudes – that enable practitioners to discover the energy metabolism, nutrients and their functions within the human body and the nutritional needs and foods

This master is a first step towards offering the guarantees that society and professionals are calling for

The EcoUniversity's aim is to reach all the related sectors: a commitment to knowledge and freedom

that cover them, to identify risks of both deficiencies and excesses, and to gain knowledge of the use of traditional foods in our culture and the most important foods from other cultures owing to their nutritional or therapeutic content.

The initial plan is modest (as the crisis dictates), but over time a degree programme might be drawn up to develop training in this field of knowledge using the UOC's well-grounded online methodology.

However, practical application of the knowledge is indispensable. The EcoUniversity has already sought the synergies needed. In the middle term, it will be feasible to develop specific 'a la carte' courses for professionals with proven experience in the field of health. At the same time, it is important to have a methodology to assess the competencies acquired. The idea is for all students to have access to a central software programme in which the proper, effective development of the therapeutic techniques in each of the disciplines is guaranteed on a lifelong learning platform based on therapeutic algorithms or development and research instruments.

The EcoUniversity's aim is to reach all the related sectors: a commitment based on both knowledge and freedom.



## Gaia Education

Since last Autumn Gaia Education in partnership with UOC is teaching the pioneering Gaia Education Design for Sustainability programme (GEDS). Based on the four core pillars of the Ecovillage Design Curriculum: the social, worldview, ecological and economic dimensions of sustainability, it draws from the expertise of a network of some of the most successful ecovillages and community projects in the world. Gaia Education was created in 2005 over a series of meetings among experienced ecovillage educators with academic and professional backgrounds in a wide range of disciplines. The think-tank of sustainability educators was named the GEESE (Global Ecovillage Educators for Sustainable Earth), acknowledging the importance of collaboration and roving leadership as exhibited by the migration behaviour of a flock of geese. Over 1,300 students from five continents have been trained during the last four years. Forty six programmes were hosted by a great variety of organisations including the Sarvodaya network of traditional villages in Sri Lanka; the ecotown Auroville in India; the urban institute UMAPAZ in Sao Paulo; the green Kibbutz Lotan in Israel; educational centres such as Findhorn in Scotland, Ecovillage at Ithaca in New York state, and many more. The pilot year of GEDS at UOC has been successful in equipping students with the practical skills, analytic abilities, philosophical depth needed for the redesign of our societies. Gaia Education is honoured to be joining the EcoUniversity and its team of educators is now working together with UOC for the launch of the international postgraduate GEDS in the Fall 2010.

**May East,** programme Director of Gaia Education  
Desing for Sustainability



# 2nd EcoUniversity Conference

## Land, soul and society

**Opening:** Eduard Vinyamata, Director of the Campus for Peace.

**Presentation of the EcoUniversity Courses:** Alfons Vinyals, coordinator of the UOC's EcoUniversity; Ulises Escorihuela, coordinator of the Design of Sustainable Education course by Gaia Education; Jeremy Fosse from Eco-union and Pep Puig and Marta García from Ecoserveis.

**Ecological Economy:** Joan Melé, Regional Manager of the ethical Triodos Bank.

**Waldorf Education:** Antonio Malagón, Director of the Waldorf Teacher Training Centre.

**Corporate Social Responsibility:** David Cook, Executive Director of Natural Step International, and Kathrine Raleigh, delegate in Spain.

**Towards a Culture of Sustainability:** Jorge Riechmann, Vice President of Scientists for the Environment (CiMA)

Round table  
Screening of environmental short films

With special participation by Shatir Kumar, Founder and Programme Director at Schumacher College International

Barcelona, 17th of October, 2009  
UOC Barcelonès Support Centre  
Rambla de Catalunya, 6

+ info:  
[www.campusforpeace.org](http://www.campusforpeace.org)  
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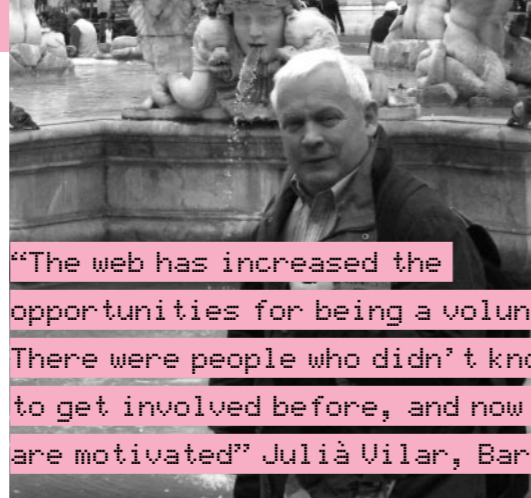
# Virtual volunteers

## Combining solidarity and new technologies

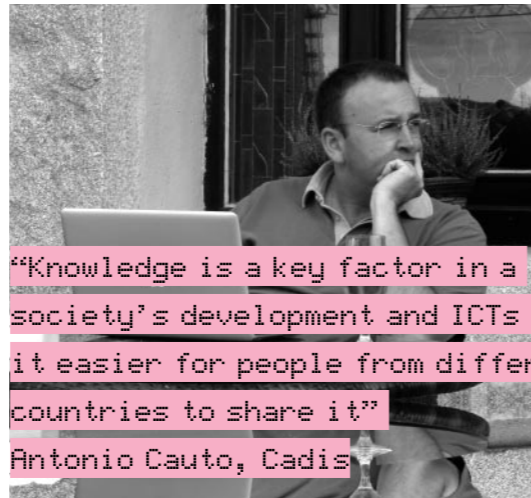
Numerous initiatives and platforms have been developed around the Internet. One of these phenomena is cyber-volunteers, people who put either their human qualities or their academic or professional experience in the field of ICTs at the service of NGOs. They are extremely important, so much so that the World Summit on the Information Society held in Geneva in 2003 stated that without cyber-volunteers the digital breach could not be closed.

The UOC and the Campus for Peace are no strangers to this phenomenon and are in fact pioneers within the Spanish university system. "The university has been involved in volunteerism since the opening of the Campus for Peace", recalls Julià Vilar, an education expert who began working at the UOC in 1995 and who has coordinated the Campus' virtual volunteers, as a volunteer himself, since September 2008. The volunteer programme at the UOC is addressed to its entire community, including students, graduates, faculty and administrative staff. Of the 100 volunteers today, the vast majority are students, but almost 15% have no further relationship with the university other than their solidarity work. In-person meetings are held occasionally to coordinate the different tasks undertaken.

The main areas of cooperation include communication and dissemination of the Campus (monthly newsletters, resources on the new website or expansion through social networks), training courses and programmes for NGOs (promotion, consultancy or materials development) and attendance at the events organised by the Campus (workshops, congresses, etc.). The volunteers also lend a hand in the virtual workshop that tracks the new students in the International Graduate Institute's Area of Humanitarian Cooperation, Peace and Sustainability to help them learn how to navigate the virtual campus skilfully.



"The web has increased the opportunities for being a volunteer. There were people who didn't know how to get involved before, and now they are motivated" Julià Vilar, Barcelona



"Knowledge is a key factor in a society's development and ICTs make it easier for people from different countries to share it" Antonio Cauto, Cadiz



"I became a cybervolunteer because I have free time available, I like helping others and it's a way of learning and interacting with others" Ester Capdevila, Barcelona



"The volunteer is personally enriched with each project, but society is, too. It is a 'quid pro quo'" Neus Flores, Barcelona

This is the case of the courses taught by Antonio Cauto, a 40-year-old Cádiz native who studied Computer Engineering and helps new students learn how to navigate their learning environment. Helping, he explains, was almost a need. "It was very natural", he recalls. "I felt that I somehow had to compensate for the fact that I had been able to access branches of knowledge that would never have been within my reach if it hadn't been for virtual training."

Ester Capdevila is a 38-year-old with a degree in Labour Sciences who is currently earning her Master's in Workplace Risk Prevention. She also served as a workshop consultant for 25 new UOC members, this time from Latin America. "I became a volunteer because I have free time available, I really like helping others and it's a way of learning and interacting with others", she stresses. During the seven-day workshop, she answered questions on how the virtual classroom, the personal mailbox and the different spaces in the Campus work. "Since I'm a UOC student, it was very easy for me to answer the questions they had", she says.

The job of the virtual trainers in the Campus of Peace focuses on solidarity projects and virtual learning for development, and on the digital skills training courses offered by the Campus. The goal is to put the knowledge the UOC generates on educational matters online in order to make it available for cooperation and development. "The cyber-volunteers are as important as the volunteers outside the web. They offer their quality time and experience free of charge, and many of the ambitious future projects would never be possible without their altruistic contributions", states Neus Flores, a 40-year-old cyber-volunteer who finished in 2205 a post-graduate course in Digital Journalism. "In an increasingly virtual world, it is very important to ease the way for new cybernauts."

The volunteer virtual trainers at the Campus for Peace have worked in training support for NGOs like Amnesty International and contributed to cooperation projects such as the digital literacy programme in Morocco, the programme aimed at strengthening civil society in the Dominican Republic and the virtual training project in the La Torrassa neighbourhood in the city of L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, targeted at the population at risk of social exclusion.

"Knowledge is a key factor in a society's development", notes Antonio. "Until now, the fact that knowledge had to be conveyed in person meant that it was unfeasible for people from different parts of the world to share their experiences and competences efficiently and flexibly. The new technologies make it easier."

According to Beatriz Seisededos, who earned her Master's in Conflictology and later helped in situ with the reinsertion programme for gang members run by the NGO Ser Paz in Ecuador, the web plays a very important role. "The new technologies", the current Red Cross representative in Bogotá states, "can provide an education that is totally beyond the reach of some people. And when I say education I mean both formal and informal, including access to information."

Regardless of the job to be done, what is clear is that serving as a volunteer is a two-way journey. "One of the things that cyber-volunteers discover the most often is that everyone ends up winning, because they, too, have been enriched by the contact", claims Julià. "The volunteer is personally enriched with each project, but society is, too. It is reciprocal enrichment, a quid pro quo. In the English-speaking business world, this is called a win-win situation, that is, everyone comes out ahead", says Neus Flores.

In an increasingly interconnected world, the phenomenon of virtual volunteerism has a long road ahead. "The web has increased the opportunities for being a volunteer. There were people who didn't know how to get involved before, and now they are motivated", stresses Vilar. "The UOC's initiative is pretty pioneering, but we are still just getting started. I am sure that in the future other universities will also offer similar experiences." Antonio Cauto is also optimistic. "I see this phenomenon with the hope that it will entail a change in global mentality, like a projection of a series of deeds that take place in cyberspace in the world so that the values acquired there later benefit society."

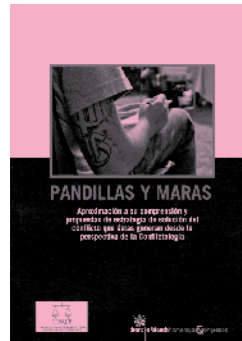
### + info:

**UN Volunteers**  
[www.onlinevolunteering.org](http://www.onlinevolunteering.org)

### On the cutting edge of university cyber-volunteerism

The Campus for Peace is developing a virtual cyber-volunteer centre which will provide a network of technological and scientific knowledge targeted at cooperation and development. The centre, which will operate from a self-managed computer programme, will help the UOC community participate in open, virtual solidarity projects around the world and will reinforce its cohesion with NGOs and other university communities.

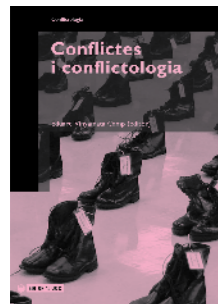
# Library



NEW

**Pandillas y maras** (Gangs)  
Eduard Vinyamata, Editorial Tirant lo Blanch

More than one million youngsters are members of gangs and criminal organisations in Latin America. In this volume, Eduard Vinyamata explains his direct experience in reinsertion programmes for gang members and proposes strategies for resolving conflicts. Where police repression has failed, non-violence has managed to lower criminality by 60% in a six-year period (Spanish).



**Conflictes i conflictologia**  
(Conflicts and Conflictology)  
Eduard Vinyamata (editor), Editorial UOC

Conflictology is the compendium of multi-disciplinary, rational and emotional scientific knowledge about conflicts, violence and crises, and its goal is to try to get individuals and societies to live in peace without violence. It is a practical discipline relevant to all professions, vocational and scientifically open and innovative. This volume is a compilation of reflections by a diverse group of people on terrorism, non-violent struggle, conflicts over water, trade and labour conflicts and police conflictology (Catalan).



NEW

**Derechos Humanos. Nuevas Realidades**  
(Human Rights. New Realities)  
Various authors, Editorial UOC  
Col·lecció Edicions del Campus per la Pau

Sixty years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we need to reflect on its validity and enforcement, redefine the rights it enshrined in 1948 and address new ones. This book is a compilation of and reflection on such basic rights as the access to culture and education, along with other rights that are fundamental today but were unthinkable years ago, like the right to sexual identity and a healthy environment (Spanish).



**La conflictologia** (Conflictology)  
Eduard Vinyamata, Editorial UOC

We all fight: couples, friends, politicians, companies and countries. But it is more difficult to resolve a conflict than to start one. This book is an introduction to conflictology, a discipline that aims to help solve problems in a host of different ways, even outside the legal system (Catalan).



# New publications by the Campus For Peace



**Conflictology**  
Biannual journal in English

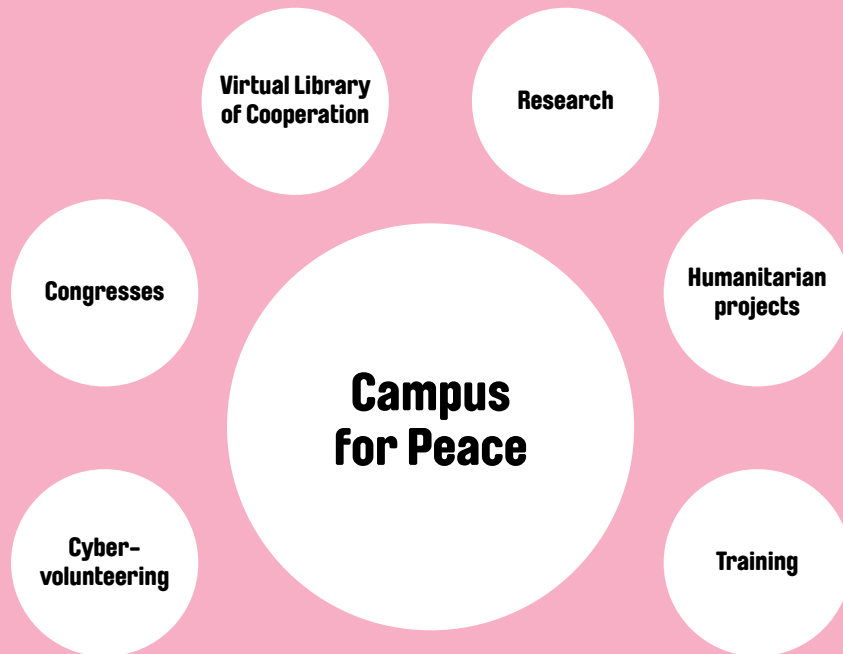
Conflict resolution and transformation, peace studies, irenology, non-violence, crisis management, mediation and alternative justice systems. Armed, family, social and political conflicts.



**EcoUniversitat**  
Biannual journal in Catalan

Sustainability, environment and ecology. Innovations, alternatives and social proposals to improve life on the planet.

**Director:** Eduard Vinyamata Editorial **Coordinators:** Rosa Mercader and Lali Sandiumenge **Editorial production:** líniazero edicions **Graphic design:** Pau de Riba for líniazero edicions **Editors:** Jordi Rovira and Anna Murgadas **Contents advisers:** Mabel Gómez and Carme Anguera **Translation:** Mary Black **With special thanks to:** Juanjo Boté, Pilar Camacho, Nelsa Curbelo, José Antonio García Niño, Lourdes Guinovart, Tere Guix, Olímpia Nofuentes, Julieta Palma, Patrícia Peralta, Daniel Turón, Julià Vilar **Campus por Peace:** Avinguda Tibidabo, 47, 08035 Barcelona. Tel: +34 93 253 57 00 / 93 253 57 64 Contact: cooperacio@uoc.edu **Printed on** 100% recycled non-chloring bleached paper **Cover photograph:** (David Campos) The Staff of Peace symbolizing the Open University of Catalonia's commitment to the universal values of peace. Planted in the garden at the UOC Central Office (Av. Tibidabo 39, Barcelona)



Projects



**Virtual School of Cooperation  
EcoUniversity**



Coordination

