Mahatma Gandhi Center for Global Nonviolence

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Mission
The Gandhi Center seeks to advance the understanding of, appreciation for and practice of nonviolence.

Aspiration
The Gandhi Center aspires for a more just and nonviolent world.

Core Values
In planning, setting priorities and carrying out its mission, the Gandhi Center is guided by eight interdependent commitments: excellence in teaching, research and scholarship, and practice; learning that emphasizes the individual and the interconnected nature of all human experience; respect among human beings and for the planet’s natural environment; finding the ways to serve the welfare of all; exercise of personal and social responsibility; diversity of thought; integrity in thought, word and action; and selfless engagement.

Leadership
A fellow philosophical traveler with Mahatma Gandhi, Professor Sushil Mittal is the (founding) director of the Gandhi Center. The team working with the director to set the vision and intellectual agenda and to provide oversight of the center includes the advisory board, the board of trustees and the program coordinator. The advisory board serves as a consulting body to the director. The board includes Nobel laureates, former heads of state, senior civil servants, CEOs of international corporations, academicians, scientists, social activists and artists from six continents who pool their experiences from a wide range of backgrounds to promote a culture of nonviolence. The board of trustees comprises distinguished individuals from the local community who provide broad oversight and guidance for the center’s operations and programs. The program coordinator provides a wide range of administrative and management support to the director.

Teaching
The Gandhi Center fosters rich, vibrant learning opportunities for students and the larger community. The center director offers a cross disciplinary course, Gandhi, Nonviolence and Global Transformation, every semester through the General Education program. Together with the Office of Residence Life, the center recently launched an innovative program titled Residence Hall Gandhian Nonviolence Project: In Search of Alternatives to War and Violence. The program introduces Gandhian nonviolence to first year students in residence halls. Other learning opportunities include overseeing community-based programs such as the children’s summer camp, school reading program, school visions program, drawing peace contest and prison program.

Further, the center introduces the students to the process by which research, scholarship and creative work are produced and enables their participation in that process, which is the key value added of a comprehensive research center. In these ways and more, the center contributes to the intellectual and creative life of the university and radiates new thinking across disciplines, into the classroom and throughout the larger community.

Research
The Gandhi Center supports research across disciplines in five broad areas with particular emphasis on scholarship that bridges theory and practical application: Theories and critiques of Gandhi; transnational and cross-cultural dimensions of Gandhi and his legacy and relevance; nonviolent praxis through everyday modes of living; alternative visions of nonviolent approaches to human relations and world affairs; alternative moral and political theories.

Publications
Publication and dissemination of research on nonviolence and peace are essential parts of the mission of the Gandhi Center. The center sponsors the peer reviewed International Journal of Gandhi Studies. This is the first publication of its kind. One of its goals is to more clearly and effectively define a new field of academic studies in Gandhian thought. The center also publishes two series of publications available online. The Working Papers Series in Global Nonviolence are research articles that have been submitted to the center. The center maintains this index of working papers in order to help disseminate, discuss and improve important ideas. Project Gandhiana is an initiative to put the writings of Mahatma Gandhi online for broader dissemination.

Conferences
Tolstoy Lectures
The Tolstoy Lecture Series in Global Nonviolence celebrates the life of Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1828–1910), a Russian novelist, social reformer, pacifist, Christian anarchist, vegetarian and moral thinker. As a moral philosopher, Tolstoy was notable for his ideas on nonviolent resistance, which were presented in his work *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, which in turn influenced Mahatma Gandhi. The Tolstoy Lectures brings distinguished scholars and practitioners of nonviolence for public lectures, seminars, panel discussions and a variety of related interactions with faculty members, students and the larger community. The series began in 2006.

Research Scholars
The Gandhi Center provides an intellectual home for visiting scholars working on projects related to global nonviolence. The center provides its visiting scholars with office space and modest administrative support. In return, visiting scholars are asked to engage in the intellectual life of the center and present their own research. Both U.S. and foreign scholars are encouraged to apply. The program began in 2007.

Mahatma Gandhi Chair
The Mahatma Gandhi Chair in Global Nonviolence has been established at the Gandhi Center in collaboration with the government of India. The holder of the chair is designated as the Government of India-James Madison University Mahatma Gandhi Professor of Global Nonviolence. It is a rotating chair with a two-year tenure. The GOI-JMU Mahatma Gandhi Professor will undertake a broad range of teaching, research and outreach initiatives to advance the mission of the center. The chair was established in 2009.

Student Internships
The Internship Program at the Gandhi Center offers unique and diverse opportunities for undergraduate students who are interested in the center’s work. The program has special appeal for those who wish to combine academic study with practical application and experience. The program began in 2006.

Community and Global Engagement
The Community and Global Engagement Program at the Gandhi Center prepares children and youth to appreciate the value of nonviolence, the potential of nonviolent action to address conflicts, the value of social responsibility, the interconnected nature of human experience and the planet's natural environment. Some of these programs include a summer camp, school reading program, school visions program, drawing peace contest and prison program.

Student Affiliate
The Gandhi Center is proud to offer support and encouragement to its student affiliate, JMU's Global Nonviolence Club. The club has implemented several campus wide events.

The King Reading Room
The Martin Luther and Coretta Scott King Reading Room, located at the Gandhi Center, houses a growing collection of electronic and print resources on Mahatma Gandhi and nonviolence. The collection serves the university and is open to researchers and the public. It is primarily a non-circulating collection.

The Gandhi Statue
The government of India has presented a larger than life-size bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi as a gift to the university in recognition of the work of the Gandhi Center. The statue was dedicated and unveiled on Oct. 2, 2008, the International Day of Nonviolence and the birth anniversary of the Mahatma, by His Excellency Ronen Sen, Ambassador of India to the United States of America. The statue, which is located on the ground floor of JMU’s new East Campus Library, is the first of Mahatma Gandhi in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Gandhi Award
The Mahatma Gandhi Global Nonviolence Award is bestowed upon individuals with global recognition who believe humans everywhere are to be peacemakers, support nonviolence, love their enemies, seek justice, share their possessions with those in need and express and demonstrate these beliefs in their words, life and actions. The Gandhi Award is given every two years. The inaugural award was given in 2007 to the Most Reverend Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, South Africa and 1984 Nobel Peace laureate. The second award was given in 2009 jointly to former U.S. President and 2002 Nobel Peace laureate Jimmy Carter and former first lady Rosalynn Carter.