

NIRMAL AND TARA SETHIA GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP FUND IN CURRICULUM STUDIES FOR DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS ON NONVIOLENCE

To qualify for this scholarship, the primary focus of the dissertation must be on nonviolence as a positive force rooted in reverence for life, making it the essence of a good life and a good society, and a vital factor in ecological sustainability. Nonviolence encompasses values such as amity, care and compassion, humility, empathy and forgiveness, and its cultivation is facilitated by mindfulness and meditation. A dissertation supported by this scholarship should be well aligned with this understanding of nonviolence.

Purpose of Award: **Sethia Doctoral Dissertation Scholarship** will provide support for dissertation work that serves to do one or more of the following:

- significantly advance the understanding of the fundamental role of nonviolence in education and curriculum,
- contribute innovative pedagogies anchored in nonviolence as a positive force,
- demonstrate ways in which nonviolence education makes positive difference at individual and collective levels,
- substantially enhance effectiveness of practices related to nonviolence, such as mindfulness in education,
- highlight the pivotal role of nonviolence curriculum for ecological sustainability.

1. Eligibility

The Fellowship is open to all doctoral students in Curriculum Studies at OSU who have passed dissertation proposal defense, with their dissertation focus on nonviolence. Priority should be given to students who have elected the International Peace and Curriculum option.

2. Application

Application deadline for the 2025-2026 year is **March 1, 2026**. Applications for the scholarship must include the following items:

- a. Dissertation Chapter 1 and another chapter.
- b. Statement from the applicant that explains how the dissertation fulfills the purpose of the award (800 word limit) and lays out the timeline for progress in and completion of dissertation work (300 word limit).
- c. Letters of support from the dissertation advisor and another member of the advisory committee.

3. Review: Your proposal will be assessed according to the criteria of relevancy, rigor, integration, significance, and writing.

4. Award: Two dissertation scholarships will be awarded with \$10,000 for each recipient.

**Nirmal and Tara Sethia Graduate Scholarship Fund in Curriculum Studies
for Doctoral Dissertations on Nonviolence
Recipients (2024-2025)**

Jennifer Williams, PhD in International and Peace Curriculum
Lindsay Wessinger, PhD in International and Peace Curriculum

Nonviolence Curriculum: Self-(re)creation and (Re)connection
Jennifer Williams

Our world seems to be increasingly violent and divided, including our classrooms, and one cannot deal with violence without relying on nonviolence as a positive force. But it is difficult to engage in outer nonviolence work without also engaging in inner nonviolence work. My dissertation plumbs the many ways nonviolence has transformed, and continues to transform my life, my self, and my approach to education; for how can one be nonviolent with others (including those with whom one disagrees) if one has not done work to be nonviolent with/in oneself?

As I share parts of my personal journey, I will use theories such as deconstruction, phenomenology, feminist analysis, Jungian theory and psychoanalysis, historical and current ideas of nonviolence, and queer theory for creative interweaving. I draw on narrative inquiry, personal poetry, and other writing techniques to travel through the complexity of diverse theories for personal and social transformation. I imagine this dissertation as a way to build bridges through the sharing of autobiographical writing and the power of nonviolence for educators and students, inviting others to read my words, open their arms, and cavort with me under the starlight of nonviolence.

Peaceful Pedagogy: The Role of Yoga in Creating Nonviolent Classrooms
Lindsay Wessinger

This dissertation explores the profound connection between nonviolence, mindfulness, and education, aligning closely with the purpose of the Nirmal & Tara Sethia Doctoral Dissertation award. This research investigates the integration of yoga and mindfulness practices into classroom environments to foster nonviolence as a positive force that transforms individuals and communities. By rooting my work in the principles of *ahimsa* (nonviolence), empathy, and community connection, I aim to significantly advance the understanding and application of nonviolence in education. It is also vital for addressing pressing societal challenges, including violence in schools, community disconnection, and the need for sustainable relationships within and beyond the classroom.

Through narrative inquiry, my research explores the lived experiences of educators who incorporate yoga into their classrooms, shedding light on strategies for creating nonviolent learning environments. These environments emphasize emotional regulation, inclusive practices, and a sense of interconnectedness, promoting ecological sustainability. By fostering mindfulness not as instrumental but existential, this study goes beyond the focus on mindfulness as a strategy but prioritize it as promoting loving relationships and empathy and creating educational conditions for nonviolent relational dynamics.