

CONF 501
INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION

Semester: Fall 2014
Class Time: Wednesday, 4:30pm-7:10pm
Location: Arlington: Founders Hall 310
Instructor: Ho-Won Jeong, 5th Floor Metropolitan Building, GMU
Arlington, 703 993-1313
Office Hour: Wed. 7:20-8:20pm or by appointment
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'Instruments of coercion, once created, have a tendency to find their own natural masters.'

— George F. Kennan

'When I consider the lack of cooperation in human society, I can only conclude that it stems from ignorance of our interdependent nature.'

— The Dalai Lama

Course Objectives

This course is designed to introduce the basic theories and analytical framework of conflict to those who are interested in how to manage adversarial relationships in human society. The concepts and case studies to be examined in the class are relevant to different levels of analysis, i.e., inter-state and inter-group conflicts as well as issues which have global implications. This class should be useful for enhancing our understanding of various types of conflicts emerging in the social relationships of modern society.

The topics are not limited to ethno-political conflict, but also include environmental, organizational, religious and other types of conflicts that may result from incompatible economic interests and identity and value differences. Reflecting on the development of conflict studies, theoretical and conceptual explanations offered in this class benefit from cross utilization of multi-disciplinary approaches, especially, international relations, political science, sociology, psychology, communication, and anthropology.

The class is intended to enrich and expand our knowledge about conflict resolution by overcoming the limited scope of traditional management and control approaches to conflict, which are commonly accepted in public policy and other traditional disciplinary fields (oriented toward the maintenance of the status quo). In providing foundational knowledge for students of conflict studies, this class will

not only examine emerging theories, but will also refer to classical work in conflict studies.

In enhancing the practical knowledge base for students, various concepts (related to conflict dynamics and processes) will be applied to important past and current issues. The class will discuss the kinds of concepts that need to be further developed and explore the methods of profiling and mapping conflict. As an applied field, our attention will be focused on the utility of concepts and theories in the comparison of diverse human experiences.

The class schedule for the entire semester is divided into three parts. The lesson will start with identifying the principles and methods of conflict analysis along with the introduction of basic concepts popularly used in the field. The second part of the course will focus on conflict dynamics and processes that will be followed by the investigation of strategies and methods of conflict resolution. The final part of the course will be devoted to conflict management and resolution theories and practice.

Class Activities and Requirements:

Besides regular class attendance and participation, students will be asked to submit a short written essay on one of the books assigned to the class. The course grade is determined by class presentation and participation (10%), midterm (20%), final exam (20%), a book review (10%), and final research paper (40%).

Missing more than two classes will contribute to a lower course grade; the absence of four or more classes can result in the failure of the entire course; exceptions are recognized for documented personal illness, family or other emergencies.

Class attendance does not simply mean the your physical presence in class. A lower grade or even failure of the course can incur, depending on how frequently a student is engaged in personal computing or other private activities instead of paying full attention to the flow of the class. The use of a laptop in the classroom is limited only to class notes or quick search for any relevant course information.

Permission for late submission of assignments and a grade of "incomplete" for the course will be given only in cases of personal illness or immediate family crisis. Late papers will receive penalized points. Students should also read the statement of ICAR's Academic Standards and the University's Honor Code.

* Class presentation and participation (10%): Each student will be asked to make at least one presentation of a reading assignment in the syllabus. Each presentation is expected to be 15-20 minutes. It needs to focus on key concepts and theories discussed in the assignments. While no handouts need to be

prepared, each presenter is expected to develop a short outline. The outline needs to be submitted to the instructor electronically. It can be written in *either Word or Power Points*.

* Your class participation grade will be based on how thoroughly you have prepared for each class. That means that you have to keep the reading assignments and should be able to answer questions asked by the instructor in class. Evaluation will be based on the quality of a student's participation in class discussion. It is not a reflection on how frequently students talk about particular events and issues they know, but on how students demonstrate the relevance of their understanding of key concepts and ideas based on the reading assignments. Questions and comments (that contribute to the learning of other students) will be especially welcomed and appreciated. If you feel that you do not have enough opportunity to talk in class, you can use class break or other occasions to talk to your instructor individually to share your understanding of the course material. You are always welcome to approach the instructor with any questions or ideas which you want to dwell more on.

* The exams, mid-term and final (40%): The best way to prepare for your midterm and final exam is to read your reading assignments prior to the class each week and pay attention to what concepts and theories are mentioned and discussed more in depth in class. The exams are designed to help you grasp basic understanding of conceptual approaches to conflict analysis. Given the limited length of the exam, you will be asked to synthesize theoretical ideas learned in class. The exam is evaluated highly when it refers specifically to what you have learned in the required reading assignment and class lectures.

* Final Research Paper (40%): Students will be asked to choose particular conflict events, and apply a conflict process model to their cases. The paper needs to demonstrate a student's ability to apply concepts of conflict analysis to a particular conflict. The final term paper should not be a duplicate of or similar to any of the papers which the student wrote in the past for other classes. The instructor is available for consultation on the selection of the topic. The paper length must be 12-15 pages in single space.

* A book review (10%) will be a reflective short essay on one of the reading assignments. It needs to focus on how the author describes the conflict, for example, its effects at a personal, family, group and societal level. It would be easier for you to develop understanding of the author's experience if you attempt to put yourself in the shoes of the person who has lived through the particular experience.

* Communication with the instructor is welcomed and encouraged. Most correspondence is expected to be handled in five business days. It is highly advisable for students to properly understand the nature of any class

requirements (e.g., exams) ahead of time. Inquiries about the weekly course material or assignments need to be made at least a week ahead of the schedule. It is the students' responsibility to check their understanding if they are not so sure of the nature of course assignments and requirements.

Required Reading

These books are available for purchase at the Arlington Bookstore.

Ho-won Jeong, *Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis*, London: Sage Publication (2008);

Tubten Khetsun, 2008. *Memories of Life in Lhasa Under Chinese Rule*. New York: Columbia University Press;

Ho-Won Jeong, *Conflict Management and Resolution* (London: Routledge, November 2009)

http://erlanbakiev.weebly.com/uploads/1/0/8/3/10833829/ho-won_jeong-conflict_management_and_resolution_an_introduction-routledge_2010.pdf

Ho-Won Jeong, *Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005.

Recommended Reading

John W. Burton, *Conflict Resolution: Its Language and Processes* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996)

John W. Burton, *Violence Explained* (University of Manchester Press, 1997)

John W. Burton and Frank Dukes, *Conflict: Practices in Management, Settlement & Resolution* (New York: St. Martins, 1990)

John W. Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention* (New York: St. Martins, 1990)

John W. Burton ed., *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution* (New York: St. Martins, 1990)

Christopher Mitchell, *The Structure of International Conflict* (London: Macmillan, 1981)

Christopher Mitchell, *Gestures of Conciliation* (London: Macmillan, 2000)

Dean Pruitt, Jeffrey Rubin, Sung Hee Kim
Social Conflict (London: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2003)

Louis Kriesberg, *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006)

Jolle Demmers, *Theories of Violent Conflict: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2012)

For Practice

John W. Burton, *Resolving Deep Rooted Conflict: a Handbook* (University Press of America)

Christopher Mitchell, *Peacemaking and the Consultant's Role* (Farnborough: Gower Press, 1981)

Christopher Mitchell and Michael Banks, *Handbook of Conflict Resolution: The Analytical Problem Solving Approach* (New York: Pinter, 1996).

Course Schedule

Session 1 (8/27): Introduction
Overview of the course

Session 2: (9/3): Analytical Frameworks and Tools

Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis, ch. 1-2

Conflict Management and Resolution, ch 1-3

Suggested Reading:

John W. Burton 'Conflict Resolution and the Human Dimension'
http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol3_1/burton.htm

John W. Burton, 'CIVILIZATIONS IN CRISIS: FROM ADVERSARIAL TO PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESSES'
http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol1_1/Burton.htm

Class Discussion

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/israelgaza-conflict-israels-mowing-of-gazas-lawn-is-an-unjust-war-9659364.html>

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/columnists/robert-fisk/israelgaza-conflict-what-would-we-do-if-it-had-been-35-palestinian-dead-and-800-israeli-30461439.html>

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2014/07/23/we-are-israeli-reservists-we-refuse-to-serve/?hpid=z2>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/holocaust-survivors-and-their-descendants-accuse-israel-of-genocide-9687994.html>

Session 3: (9/10): Conflict Situations and Sources

Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis, ch. 3-4

Suggested Reading:

The Dalai Lama, 'The Global Community and the Need for Universal Responsibility'

http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol7_1/Lama.htm

John W. Burton, 'Introducing the person into thinking about social policies'

http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol6_1/Burton3.htm

'Peace Begins at Home'

http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol6_1/Burton.htm

Class Discussion

Young Tibetan Mining Protester Dies in Prison After 'Torture'

<http://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/protester-02062014163940.html>

Session 4: (9/17): Power, Identity and Structure

Conflict Management and Resolution, ch 4-6

Class Discussion

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Books/Book-Reviews/2014/0808/China-s-Second-Continent-tells-the-fascinating-yet-alarming-story-of-China-s-economic-colonization-of-Africa>

Session 5: (9/24): Voices from the Margin

Tibet: Cry of the Snow Lion (an award-winning documentary that brings an epic story compellingly)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EC0jChIBwHE>

(1:39:50)

Session 6: (10/1) Book Review

Tubten Khetsun, 2008. *Memories of Life in Lhasa Under Chinese Rule*.

While reading the book, please consider such questions as 'what kind of approach do we need in understanding this conflict?', 'what kind of understanding of the conflict could we forge from the author's experience of living

under an oppressed rule that does not recognize both physical security, material well-being and self-identity?' How do you characterize this conflict? Is there anything to be done about this type of conflict?

Reflective Essay Due (minimum 2 and half pages in single space)

Session 7: (10/8): Conflict Process and Dynamics

Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis, ch. 5-7

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jtme6k_ts00
the mission

Oct. (10/15): Midterm

Session 8: (10/22) Escalation to De-escalation

Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis, ch. 8-11

'Where do we go from here?'
http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol6_1/Burton4.htm

Class Discussion

'An American NGO in North Korea'
<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/12/an-american-ngo-in-north-korea/266269/>

Session 9 (10/29) Conflict Management and Negotiation

Conflict Management and Resolution, ch. 7-8

Suggested Reading

Joel S. Wit, Daniel Poneman, Robert L. Gallucci, *Going Critical: The First North Korean Nuclear Crisis*

Fisher, Roger, Andrea Kupfer Schneider, Elizabeth Borgwardt, and Brian Ganson. *Coping with international conflict: A systematic approach to influence in international negotiation*. Prentice Hall, 1997.

Young, H. Peyton, "Fair Division" In *Negotiation Analysis*, edited by H. Peyton Young, 25-46. The University of Michigan Press, 1991.

Session 10: (11/5) Mediation and Facilitation

Conflict Management and Resolution, ch. 9-11

Suggested Reading

O'Neill, B. "Conflictual Moves in Bargaining: Warnings, Threats, Escalations, and Ultimatums." In *Negotiation Analysis*, edited by H. Peyton Young, 87-108. The University of Michigan Press, 1991.

Myerson, Roger B. "Analysis of Incentives in Bargaining and Mediation." In *Negotiation Analysis*, edited by H. Peyton Young, 67–86. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1991.

Session 11: (11/12) Application
Tibetan Dialogue (11/16)

Session 12: (11/19) Post-Conflict *Peace Building: Security to Reconciliation*

Peacebuilding in Postconflict Societies. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005.

Session 13: (11/26) Thanksgiving

Session 14: (12/3) Final Exam

Session 15: (12/10) Final Paper

Student Support

You may refer to university policy and programs (<http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>). If you need special assistant, support is available at GMU Disability Services (<http://ods.gmu.edu/>). Other campus program include Counseling and Psychological Services, Learning Services, University Career Services, the Writing Center, etc. The students of different faiths can consult with the instructor in advance to help minimize difficulties 'should their religious observances impact their participation in class activities and assignments' (<http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday-calendar/>).

Honor Code and Plagiarism:

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. You can find a copy of the Honor Code at academicintegrity.gmu.edu. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review. With specific regards to plagiarism, three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. If you

have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor.

ICAR requires that all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. ICAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it.