

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

GLOBAL CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION

CONF 340 - 001

(CRN # 73723)

Prerequisites: CONF 100, 300, and 60 credits; or permission of the instructor.

Fall Semester, 2008

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Office Hours: Tues and Thurs 1:00-2:00 p.m.;
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Class Meetings: Robinson Hall A, Room 105
Tues and Thurs 3:00-4:15 p.m.

► To access the course website, go to: (TBA)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines conflict at the macro-level, including an interdisciplinary array of theories of international and global violence, conflict, and justice. We examine the role of the following as they pertain to the analysis of global conflict: vital resources; ethnic identity; religion and ideology; narrative and discursive representations; national foreign policies; municipal and regional governmental policies; economic policies of international financial institutions; human rights norms and institutions; forms of collective action seeking social, political, and economic justice, as well as cultural recognition, preservation or advancement (including riots, rebellions, social movements, and revolutions), deploying strategies and tactics ranging from peaceful to violent, legal to illegal, as well as local to transnational, and targeting not only states, but also civil society, political society, corporations, and global institutions.

We will give special attention to the impact of globalization, the changing landscape of global conflict since the end of the Cold War, and the shift in the United States' security policies. Some of the topics that we will cover include the following: the underlying causes of conflicts resulting in abusive human rights practices (e.g., the use of child soldiers, slavery, torture, refoulement, genocide, rape, piracy, and extreme environmental degradation); the geopolitics of energy; transnational deviance and the underside of global conflict (political piracy, transnational organized crime syndicates, transnational networks of WMD smuggling, state-facilitated flows of illicit goods and services, and the construction of human rights-free zones as constituent dimensions of a changing global order); the political, economic, and social dimensions of national and global security; the role of states and corporations in perpetuating economic and political violence; the implications for states and civil society of "corporatizing" military conflict; the relationship between free markets, democracy, and ethnic conflict; globalization and political backlash (ethnically targeted seizures and nationalizations; crony capitalism and minority rule; expulsions and "ethnic cleansing"; and assimilation and globalization); ethno-nationalism and violent Anti-American protest; the global rise of religious violence; "third world" food riots stemming from structural adjustment policies;

transnational activism in both democratic and authoritarian state contexts; transnational legal conflict; transnational networks of governance; and the role of the media and marketing in shaping the emergence (and repression) of social movements and insurgency. In the process will engage in a deliberate survey of contemporary conflict occurring in countries throughout the world.

From class readings and discussion, case studies, group presentations, thought-provoking take-home quizzes, and a series of conflict analysis exercises, students develop analytical skills that will enhance their ability to understand the diverse kinds of conflict occurring throughout the world, and better prepare them for thinking about how to resolve such conflicts. This course prepares students for further course work in the international conflict concentration.

(3 Semester Credits).

REQUIRED TEXTS

Sites, Kevin. 2007. *In the Hot Zone: One Man, One Year, Twenty Wars*. Harper Perennial. ISBN: 9780061228759.

Klare, Michael T. 2008. *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: The New Geopolitics of Energy*. New York: Metropolitan Books. ISBN: 9780805080643.

Walton, John and David Seddon. 1994. *Free Markets and Food Riots: The Politics of Global Adjustment*. Wiley-Blackwell. ISBN-13: 97806311822474.

Correra, Gordon. 2006. *Shopping for Bombs: Nuclear Proliferation, Global Insecurity, and the Rise and Fall of the A.Q. Khan Network*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 0-19-530495-0.

Polletta, Francesca. 2006. *It Was Like a Fever: Storytelling in Protest and Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 0226673766.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (AND RELATIVE WEIGHT OF GRADED ASSIGNMENTS)

The course format mixes lectures, group discussion, and film/video presentations. Students should take notes, both on lectures and on the reading, and films, with the intention of addressing the key themes of the course.

Class Participation (10% of your final grade)

Class attendance is required. It is your responsibility to sign the class roster which I will circulate at the beginning of each class. Unexcused absences will lower your participation grade. If you must miss class, be sure to let the instructor know (in advance, if possible), because you may be eligible for an excused absence. Regardless of whether or not your absence is excused, it is your responsibility to arrange to have a classmate brief you on the material in class that you missed. Please do not ask the instructor if you “missed anything important” in your absence.

I will post a full schedule of assignments for the semester on the course website. The course requires a healthy dose of reading, and you should keep pace with the scheduled assignments. Class participation starts before you come to class, with having done the readings and thought about what seems useful and illuminating, what seems wrong or unclear. A good practice would be to take brief notes on your day’s reading – indicating what issues you found most interesting or most problematic – and therefore most worth attention during class meetings. Doing so will facilitate not only your comprehension of the lectures, but also regular class discussion, which is a central aspect of the course. Ten percent of your final grade will be based on class participation, measured not only in terms of how often, but how well, you contribute to class discussion and activities.

Active, effective contribution means being attentive to the flow of the class' discussion, and being able to distinguish an apt intervention in an ongoing argument from an attempt to redirect the discussion to a new topic. Students are expected to actively engage with issues raised in classroom discussions and in homework assignments.

The readings are demanding and require intensive examination of a broad variety of issues and modes of thought. We will be discussing contentious political issues in this course. Students are encouraged to express diverse perspectives. You are likely to encounter strong opinions and it is inevitable that at least some of these opinions will make you or your colleagues uncomfortable. You will be expected to strike a healthy balance in conference between arguing your own position on these issues, listening to others, and helping the class as a collectivity to explore how the sociologists you read defend their approaches. Students and the instructor should interact with each other in a mutually respectful manner. They should articulate their ideas, concerns, arguments, critical questions and responses without alienating, marginalizing, or humiliating anyone. (For example, please avoid disrespectful *ad hominem* arguments, slanderous statements, hurtful stereotyping, or intentionally offensive non-verbal gesturing.) I am not requiring you to be "PC" (politically correct), but rather "BC" (basically civil).

Quizzes (40% of your final grade)

We will have five quizzes – one every three weeks (i.e., weeks 2, 5, 8, 11, and 14) - that cover our readings this semester. Each quiz will be a take-home assignment consisting of short essay questions. Quizzes # 1, # 2, and #3 will be worth 5% each; Quiz #4 will be worth 10%; and Quiz # 5 will be worth 15%; In sum, your reading quizzes will be worth 40% of your grade.

Why quizzes? (1) To encourage you to read the material; (2) to ensure that class discussion involves you and your classmates, and not just me giving the "re-cap" of the main points from the reading; (3) to provide you with grades early in the semester that give you a sense of how well you are progressing in terms of understanding the course material; and (4) to substitute for a mid-term and final exam (that's right – no mid-term nor final exams in this class).

Conflict Analysis Exercises (50% of your final grade)

You will conduct five conflict analysis exercises – one every three weeks (i.e., weeks 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15). Each analysis will draw cumulatively upon the theoretical approaches that we discuss during the semester. Exercise # 1 will be worth 5%; Exercises # 2, #3, and #4 will be worth 10% each; and Exercise #5 will be worth 15%; In sum, your conflict analysis exercises will be worth 50% of your grade.

GRADING SCALE

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Range of Number Grades</u>
A	100-94
A-	93-90
B+	89-87
B	86-84
B-	83-80
C+	79-77
C	76-74
C-	73-70
D	69-60
F	Below 60

Late Assignments

Late assignments will not be accepted for a grade unless authorized by the instructor prior to the due date.

Incomplete Grades

The instructor discourages incomplete grades and will give them only in unusual circumstances and, even then, only when formally arranged in advance between the student and the instructor.

The following grade scales should help you to assess your grade on various assignments throughout the quarter:

Grading Scale

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
100 Points	100-94	93-90	89-87	86-84	83-80	79-77	76-74	73-70	69-60	Below 60
55 Points	55.0-51.7	51.2-49.5	49.0-47.9	47.3-46.2	45.7-44.0	43.5-42.4	41.8-40.7	40.2-38.5	38.0-33.0	Below 33.0
35 Points	35.0-32.9	32.6-31.5	31.2-30.5	30.1-29.4	29.1-28.0	27.7-27.0	26.6-25.9	25.6-24.5	24.2-21.0	Below 21.0
10 Points	10.0-9.4	9.3-9.0	8.9-8.7	8.6-8.4	8.3-8.0	7.9-7.7	7.6-7.4	7.3-7.0	6.9-6.0	Below 6.0

PERCENTAGE RANGE LETTER GRADE COMMENTS

100 - 94 A

Given for work that meets all expectations, and also goes beyond an analysis of course material to develop new, creative, and unique ideas. An A is rarely given.

93 - 90 A-

Given for work that meets all expectations, and also contains some unique elements of insight and effort. You will have to work very hard to receive an A-.

89 - 87 B+

Given for very good to excellent work that analyzes material explored in class and is a reasonable attempt to synthesize material.

86 - 84 B

Given for work that meets most expectations, but contains some problems.

83 - 80 B-

Given for work that meets some expectations, but contains numerous problems.

79 - 77 C+

Given for adequate work that satisfies the assignment, but offers a more limited analysis of material explored in class.

76 - 74 C

Given for work that is of average quality.

73 - 70 C-

Given for work that does not meet basic expectations.

69 - 67 D+

Given for unsatisfactory work; but which nevertheless reflects a high degree of participation and effort.

66 - 60 D

Given for unsatisfactory work; and reflects a low degree of participation and effort

59 - 0 F

Given for unsatisfactory work; and reflects unsatisfactory participation and effort.

CONTESTING GRADES

I strongly encourage you to talk to me about any grade I give you in this course. The best time for this is during my office hours or by appointment. While there is no guarantee that I will change your grade, at the very least you will get a better sense of what my expectations are - and this may help you on future assignments.

GETTING ASSISTANCE DURING THE COURSE

I strongly encourage you to contact me if you want to discuss or clarify any course material. I check my email regularly, and am also willing to chat any time I am in my campus office. Please do not hesitate to let me know if there is anything I can do to make your experience in this course more positive for you.

ARRANGING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

I am very happy to work with students in need of special accommodations in order to ensure that everyone is able to learn and participate fully in the course. If you need disability-related accommodations in this class, or if you have emergency medical information, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please see me privately after class or at my office. The Disability Resource Center is the campus office responsible for verifying that students have disability-related needs for academic accommodations, and for planning appropriate accommodations in cooperation with the students themselves and their instructors. The Disability Resource Center is located in SUB I, Room 222, where you can make an appointment, or call 703-993-2474 or 703-993-2476 (TDD/TTY).

A web page describing the Center's resources and policies regarding accommodations is available at <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/>.

HONOR CODE POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I expect you to understand and abide by the University's policy regarding the Honor Code, which may be found at <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12>.

In short, the University's policy regarding the Honor Code prohibits any form of cheating on exams or written assignments. It also prohibits plagiarism, so be certain to properly cite all information that you use in your papers. Also, make extensive, very specific references to our course materials in your papers. Cheating and plagiarism are very serious infractions, and I deal with them severely in this course. If I receive a paper that has few specific references to our course materials, I will be inclined to assume that you have downloaded it off the Internet. If I determine that the paper has been plagiarized, then I will give you a failing grade. I will also likely report this alleged violation to the Honor Committee, who will consider further sanctions. If you have any questions about this policy I encourage you to come and talk with me about it.

A new website, academicintegrity.gmu.edu, is under construction and is scheduled to be up-and-running within a few more weeks. In the meantime, you can still find information and forms pertaining to the Honor Code and Committee at <http://honorcode.gmu.edu>. For more information or assistance, feel free to contact Dr. Donna Fox at dfox1@gmu.edu or call 703-993-8797.

For additional help in identifying and avoiding plagiarism, see the Georgetown University Honor Council's article presenting excellent examples and tips on what NOT to do when writing a paper at the following website: <http://www.georgetown.edu/honor/plagiarism.html>. This article includes an ethical statement and definition related to plagiarism.

Also, you can always consult the Student Academic Affairs Ombudsman Dolores Gomez-Moran, who provides students with a neutral, independent, informal, and confidential resource for resolving academic concerns fairly. Her office is located at the Johnson Center, Room 245. Phone: 703-993-3306; E-mail: ombuds@gmu.edu; Web: www.gmu.edu/departments/ombudsman.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN WORK

Always put your name on your paper. Give your paper a title and page numbers. Do not insert double-returns between paragraphs. Unless I request it, do not turn assignments in with report covers. Use 1 inch margins, a normal font size, and double-spacing on each page. Please do not use small fonts or single spacing, as this makes it hard to insert comments.

****KEEP MULTIPLE COPIES OF ALL YOUR WORK****

Always keep a duplicate copy of your paper or any other course work in a safe place, in case the original gets lost or you run into computer problems. Save a copy of your paper on a separate computer diskette, and update frequently as you are writing. Keep extra copies of all your assignments until after the semester ends and you have received your official grades from the Registrar's Office. This is a crucial point: *No credit can be given for papers that are lost (by you or me) or rendered un-retrievable because of computer problems.* There are no exceptions to this rule, so be extremely careful to keep a backup copy of all your work!

THE "THREE ERROR" RULE

I will allow up to three basic grammatical or formatting errors to slide without penalizing you. However, I will deduct one percentage point from your final paper grade for every subsequent basic error of grammar or formatting. In other words, if I was going to give you a 90 percent on your paper, but I identified thirteen basic grammatical errors, you will receive an 80 percent. Basic grammatical errors include: incorrect spelling; incorrect punctuation; incorrect verb agreement; sloppy paragraph construction; run-on sentences; and other basic errors. If you are concerned about your ability to write error-free papers, you can do one or more of the following: 1) turn in an initial draft to me, and I can give it back with suggestions for revision, 2) work with a friend or someone at the writing center on an initial draft, or 3) read Strunk and White's *Elements of Style* -- an invaluable resource for improving your writing, and which is now online at <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>.

TEN POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN WRITING ESSAYS/PAPERS

- 1) Begin your paper with an engaging introductory paragraph. Make the reader really wants to read your paper.
- 2) In the first or second paragraph of your paper, insert one sentence that clearly states what your paper is about.
- 3) In general, use normal terminology in your papers. Avoid the use of overly-complicated phrases or jargon.
- 4) Avoid relying on over-generalizations. Refer to specific cases and evidence to build your arguments.
- 5) In general, do not begin or end paragraphs with quotations from sources.
- 6) Do not turn in papers that are mostly quotations. Make sure most of the words in your paper are yours.
- 7) Make sure that every sentence in your paper is very straight-forward and clear.
- 8) Make sure that every sentence in your paper builds on the last. Organize your ideas carefully.
- 9) Carefully construct your paragraphs. Make certain all sentences in a paragraph are connected with one another.
- 10) End your paper with a strong conclusion. Leave the reader with something intriguing to think about.

NOTE: In addition, see "**How to Write a Short Critical Essay**" on our course website.

GRADING CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN WORK

1) Logical coherence (33%)

- Organize your thoughts and information in a clear order.
- State your observations and conclusions clearly.
- Use evidence to support your conclusions.

2) Engagement with course issues and concepts (33%)

- In every paper, make use of concepts/methods of analysis discussed in class.
- Unless I give you specific permission, you should be sure to incorporate at least **three** course readings/lectures into any research paper you write. Shorter critical essays must incorporate the key concepts from at least **one** course reading/lecture.
- For “conflict analysis exercises,” keep in mind that each subsequent assignment is expecting from you a more complex analysis that draws cumulatively upon the material from the course. Thus, for example, the first exercise may ask you to focus on the role that resources play in a particular conflict that I have you analyze; whereas the second exercise may ask you to consider the role that both resources and ethnic identity play in a particular case of conflict that I have you analyze. By the fifth exercise, you may be considering the role of all of the following: resources; ethnic identity; national foreign policy; global financial institutions’ structural adjustment policies; transnational networks; and the politics of narrative and discursive representations.

3) Quality of your particular analysis (33%)

- Try to make your paper interesting and unique.
- Try to go beyond simply re-stating someone else's argument.
- Always make sure that your paper ends with a clear and interesting conclusion.

GUIDELINES FOR CITING YOUR SOURCES

In your papers, you must cite all sources of information used in the body of your paper and then include a complete list of references at the end of your paper. Below I provide examples of the format that is most widely used in the fields of sociology and anthropology, and that I prefer you use. This format is from the Chicago Manual of Style (Documentation Two). For a more complete list of citation examples than those that I provide below, see <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/sources/citation.htm>.

Remember, you must cite not only direct quotations (which should be identified with quotation marks and page numbers), but also summarized information you got from a text. I expect you to look over these examples carefully, and utilize this format in your written work. Failure to do so will seriously impact your grade.

Here are a couple of examples of easy ways to cite your sources. Let's say you have written a paper on a new kind of energy system, the fuel cell, in which you have collected information from a variety of sources (from books, journal articles, newspapers, organizations or companies, and Internet sources). Within the body of the paper, place in parentheses the author's last name, year, and page where the information comes from. Then, at the end of your paper, list each of the sources in a reference section, called “Works Cited.” If the source has been published by an organization, use the organization's name in place of the author name for in-text citations.

TEXT FROM THE BODY OF THE PAPER:

The competitive race to bring fuel cell-powered products to the consumer market has become particularly intense in the automotive industry. The opening phase in this race came in October 1997, when Japanese automobile companies unveiled several fuel cell cars at the Tokyo Motor Show. In January 1998 General Motors, Ford, Chrysler and the German company Daimler-Benz all announced they were intensifying their own efforts to manufacture fuel cell vehicles (Bradsher 1998: 10). By 1999 a number of joint ventures had been formed to work towards the mass- production of fuel cell vehicles. The current leader in this effort is a

partnership between the Daimler-Chrysler, Ford, and Ballard Power corporations. This partnership has already entered into an agreement with the state of California to supply fuel cell vehicles beginning in 2000, and the group hopes to market as many as 40,000 fuel cell cars by 2004. Meanwhile, General Motors and Toyota have teamed up to develop their own fuel cell cars. Similar efforts are being undertaken by Honda, BMW, and Mitsubishi Motors (Ball 1999: 2; Evarts 1999: 122; Smith 1999).

Fuel cells can be assembled in different sizes, from systems small enough for use in electronic devices to systems large enough to generate electricity in grid-connected power stations. Indeed, a recent survey of the commercial prospects of fuel cell systems conducted by the Electric Power Research Institute concluded that competitively priced fuel cells would be providing electricity in a wide variety of applications within five years in the United States (EPRI 1997). Numerous companies have already begun developing small fuel cells for use in laptop computers, roadside warning signs, and other electronic components. Meanwhile, firms such as Analytic Power and Plug Power are engaged in a competitive race to mass-produce fuel cell systems for use in residential homes. And finally, corporations such as Siemens have also begun manufacturing large fuel cells designed to generate electricity in commercial buildings and utility plants (Johnson 1999).

WORKS CITED (To be included at the end of your paper)

Ball, Jeffrey. 1999. "Auto Makers are Racing to Market 'Green' Cars Powered by Fuel Cells," *Wall Street Journal*, Mar. 15, p. 2. [This is how to reference a newspaper article.]

Bradsher, Keith. 1998. "US Auto Makers Showing Interest in Fuel Efficiency," *New Energy Systems*, vol 2(1), pp. 10-20. [This is how to reference an article in a journal.]

Evarts, Eric. 1999. "The Refueling of America," *Environmental News Network*, April 22, URL: <http://www.enn.com/99/refuel.html>. [This is how to reference an article from the Internet.]

EPRI. 1997. *The Market Potential of Fuel Cells*. Electric Power Research Institute: Boulder, CO. [This is how to reference a study put out by an organization.]

Johnson, Karl. 1999. "Fuel Cells for a Sustainable Future," pp. 13-26 in: John Smith (ed.). *New Energy Technologies*. Norton Publishers: Westport, CN. [This is how to reference a chapter from an edited volume.]

[Note: In the text you cite the chapter author name, **not** the name of the book editor]

Smith, John. 1999. *Fuel Cells for a Sustainable Future*. W.W. Smith Publishers: Westport: CA. [This is how to reference a book.]

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