

CONF 340
GLOBAL CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION

Semester: Fall 2008
Class Time: Monday, 4:30-7:10 pm
Location: Fairfax Campus, Robinson B218
Instructor: Dr. Dennis J.D. Sandole
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the causes and conditions of *violent postmodern conflicts* within and between states. The objective is to explore to what extent this knowledge can be used as a basis for better understanding and responding to violent, *identity-driven* conflicts, through either their *prevention, management, settlement, resolution* and/or *transformation*. Examples include conflicts that led to the genocidal implosion of former Yugoslavia (e.g., Bosnia and Kosovo), challenged successor states of the former Soviet Union (e.g., Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the Russian Federation), or have escalated to post-9/11 terrorism (e.g., Afghanistan and Iraq).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Prerequisites:** Acceptance into ICAR's BA/BSc. program and successful completion of CONF 101, or permission of the instructor.
2. **Class Format:** Classes will follow an *interactive seminar format*. Hence, class attendance, participation, and the *completion of relevant readings prior to class* are highly recommended.
3. **Assessment:**

[a] A **midterm paper**, worth 40% of the final grade, in which each student identifies, discusses and assesses the *major causes* of violent global conflict - war and terrorism within and between states - ranking the identified causes in order of "causal potency" (e.g., 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.) (15-20 double-spaced pages [i.e., 250-300 words per page]). (NOTE: This is a **pillar 2 analysis**.) Due 3 November 2008.

[b] A **final paper**, also worth 40% of the final grade, in which each student (1) analyzes a complex, *identity-driven* conflict and (2) provides recommendations on how it should be handled by the international community (15-20 double-spaced pages [i.e., 250-300 words per page]). (NOTE: This is a **pillar 3 analysis**.) Due 8 December 2008.

NOTE: Since these two (2) papers are meant, among other things, to demonstrate that students have been in the course, *the papers should contain appropriate references to course concepts and the corresponding readings.* For further clarification -- including about the GMU Honor Code (e.g., avoiding any hint of plagiarism at all costs) -- please feel free to consult with the instructor.

[c] Student *presentations*: Each student will be invited to lead a discussion on one or more chapters from the readings by Clemens; Mack; Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall; and/or Sandole (see "Required Readings," below). ***In each case, the rest of the class will be expected to have read the same material to facilitate a rich discussion. Please consult with our course assistant Karla about your preferences and the order and dates on which you want to make your presentations (which may be jointly given, involving more than one student per presentation).*** Presentations should be aimed at distilling from the readings *their relevance to the themes of the midterm and final papers*; e.g., the causes of violent conflict, with implications for dealing with them, including those resulting in terrorism (worth 10% of final grade).

Overall in-class *participation* will determine whether a "borderline" final grade of, for example, B+/A- remains in the B or A category.

[d] Two (2) reviews of films to be shown in class, in each case due one week later (each review should be 2-4 double-spaced pages in length [i.e., 250-300 words per page]. Each review will be worth 5% for a total of 10% of the final grade).

5. Office Hours: 7:20 - 8:30 pm following each class in the CAR Office located at Robinson B365, or by appointment.

6. Withdrawal: The last day to drop the course without any penalty is 26 September 2008.

REQUIRED READINGS

Mack, Andrew, et al. (2005). *Human Security Report*. Human Security Centre, Liu Institute for Global Issues, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. New York and London: Oxford University Press. Go to www.humansecurityreport.info, then "Access the Report" (left side of menu).

Clemens, Jr., Walter C. (2004). *Dynamics of International Relations: Conflict and Mutual Gain in an Era of Global Interdependence*. 2nd Edition. Lanham (MD), New York, and Oxford (UK): Rowman &

littlefield.

Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall (2005). *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*. 2nd Edition. Malden (MA) and Cambridge (UK): Polity Press.

Sandole, Dennis J.D. (2002a). "Virulent Ethnocentrism: A Major Challenge for Transformational Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding in the Post-Cold War Era." *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, vol. 1, no. 4, June, pp. 4-27. (Simply insert "virulent ethnocentrism dennis sandole" into Google and a number of sites for this article will appear.)

Sandole, Dennis J.D. (2007). *Peace and Security in the Postmodern World: The OSCE and Conflict Resolution*. London and New York: Routledge (Taylor & Francis Group).

COURSE SYLLABUS

25 Aug I. Introduction: Course Overview.

1 Sep Labor Day (no class)

8 Sep II. The Problem: Conflict, Violence, and War.

A. The Subject Matter.

1. *Latent Conflict (LC)*.

2. Conflict Processes.

a. *Manifest Conflict Process (MCP)*.

b. *Aggressive Manifest Conflict Process (AMCP):
Postmodern Warfare.*

(1) Post-Cold War Ethnic Conflicts.

(2) Post-9/11 Terrorism.

B. Why is a Course on Violent Conflict Necessary?

1. Violent Conflict Trends in the United States.

2. Violent Conflict Trends Worldwide.

a. Domestic: The *spillover potential* of *intrastate* conflicts.

(1) *Functional Spillover*.

(2) *External Intervention*.

[a] Ethnic Kin Intervention.

[b] Humanitarian Intervention.

(3) *Multiplier-Effect Systemic Contagion*.

b. *Interstate/Trans-societal* (including post-9/11 terrorism and the "Clash of Civilizations").

- C. Three Theoretical and Practical Questions:
1. How Can **MCPs** be Prevented from Becoming **AMCPs**?
 2. What are the Causes of **AMCPs**?
 3. How Do We Conduct Research on **AMCPs**?
- READ: Clemens, Chapter 4;
 Mack, all;
 Ramsbotham, et al, Chapters 1-3; and
 Sandole, 2007, Chapters 1, 4 and Appendix A

15 Sep Film # 1 (Review due in class by 22 Sep 2008)

- 22 Sep/
29 Sep III. An Enhanced Basis for Understanding and Dealing with the Problem.
- A. Three levels of Conflict Reality.
 1. *Conflict-as-Symptoms* (Perceptible/Measurable Indicators of Underlying Problems and Causes).
 2. *Conflict-as-Process* (Underlying Conflicted Relationships).
 3. *Conflict-as-Start-up Conditions* (Underlying Deep-Rooted Causes and Conditions of the Conflicted Relationships).
 - B. A Comprehensive Mapping of Conflict and Conflict Resolution: *A 3-Pillar Approach (3PF)*.
 READ: Sandole, 2007, Chapters 2, 5 and Appendix B.
 (Review Mack.)
 1. **Pillar 1: Conflict** (Dependent Variable).
 - a. Parties.
 - b. Issues.
 - c. Long-term Objectives.
 - d. Means.
 - e. Conflict-handling Orientations.
 - f. Conflict Environments.
- 6 Oct 2. **Pillar 2: Conflict Causes and Conditions** (Independent Variables).
 READ: Clemens, Chapters 1, 3-8;
 Ramsbotham, et al., Chapter 4 and
 Sandole, 2007, Chapter 6.
- a. *Individual Level (Image I)*
 - [1] Biological.
 - [2] Physiological.

- [3] Learning.
- [4] Dissonance.

13 Oct Columbus Holiday (no class)

20 Oct Film # 2 (Review due in class by 27 Oct 2008)

- 27 Oct
- b. *Societal/National level (Image II)*.
 - [1] Domestic-Foreign Conflict Nexus.
 - [2] Crisis Decisionmaking.
 - [3] Action-Reaction Dynamics.
 - [4] Power Distance.
 - [5] Imperialism (and "Lateral Pressures").
 - c. *Trans-societal/International level (Image III)*.
 - [1] [Endogenous vs. Exogenous Systems.
 - [2] Bi- vs. Multipolar Systems.
 - [3] Tendencies toward the "Unit Veto" System.
 - [4] International Distribution of Wealth ("Marxist Delight").
 - d. *Global/Ecological Level (Image IV)*.
 - [1] Environmental Degradation.
 - [2] The "Malthusian Nightmare" Revisited.

3 Nov

3. **Pillar 3: Conflict Intervention.**

READ: Clemens, Chapters 2, 9-15; and Ramsbotham, et al., Chapters 5-10.

- a. 3rd Party Objectives.
 - [1] Violent Conflict *Prevention* [= **Preventive Diplomacy**].
 - [2] Conflict *Management* [= **Peacekeeping**].
 - [3] Conflict *Settlement* [= **Coercive Peacemaking**].
 - [4] Conflict *Resolution* [= **Noncoercive Peacemaking**].
 - [5] Conflict *Transformation* [*Provention*] [= **Peacebuilding**].
- b. 3rd Party Approaches for Achieving Goals.
 - [1] *Confrontational* and/or *Collaborative*

Processes.

[2] *Negative and/or Positive Peace Orientations.*

[3] *Track-1 and/or Multi-Track Actors and Techniques.*

3 Nov

MID-TERM PAPERS DUE

- 10 Nov IV. Application of Theory: Dealing with Violence, Violent Conflict and *Postmodern Warfare* Globally.
 READ: Clemens, Chapter 16;
 Ramsbotham, et al., Chapters 11-16;
 Sandole, 2002; and
 Sandole, 2007, Chapters 3, 7-10.
- 17 Nov V. Presentations on Final Papers.
- 24 Nov Presentations, continued and ending of class.
- 1 Dec **"Consultations"**
- 8 Dec FINAL PAPERS DUE**