

**CONF 101**  
**Conflict and Our World:**  
**Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution**  
**Fall 2009: August 31—December 21, 2009**

Instructor: Dr. Stella Ford  
Email: sekwuach@gmu.edu

Office: Robinson Hall B365  
Office hours:  
Wednesdays 11:40 AM -1:00PM

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays: 10:30 AM To 11:20 AM

Across all human societies, conflict is part of daily life. Sometimes it may be an annoyance, such as arguing with a sibling over the last cookie; sometimes it is more serious, such as the debate over human cloning; and sometimes it is tragic, as in the events in the Middle East in recent years. Conflict can be destructive, for example when it damages relationships among neighbors or relatives or destroys homes and livelihoods. Conflict can also be constructive, as shown by the effects of civil rights demonstrations in the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s. Our increased interconnections as a global society, as well as the upsurge in certain forms of violence, have heightened the need for more attention to determining how humanity can deal with conflict productively.

This course introduces the interdisciplinary study of conflict analysis and resolution. We will examine how and why conflict occurs in human society, and what we can do to mitigate its destructive aspects. The course includes an overview of the field including the central approaches to analyzing conflict, an extended case study of a conflict, an examination of several forms of intervention, and finally a consideration of new directions in conflict studies. We will highlight the societal, structural, and cultural factors that influence conflict, to know the major conflict resolution techniques, and to understand the complexities of the most pressing contemporary conflicts.

**Attendance in class is not only mandatory but also crucial** if you would like to succeed in this course. Some of the materials will be discussed only in class and not in the readings. You should plan to complete the assigned readings prior to each class. Be sure to look up words that are unfamiliar to you but realize that some terms have specialized meanings in the field of conflict resolution. Ask in class if you have not understood a term or an idea.

**Classroom etiquette:** Come to class on time and prepared. Turn off cell phones, pages, beeper, etc. Do not leave the room during class unless you have an emergency. Do not disturb others by talking, passing notes, playing video games, etc. Be mindful of the sensitivities of others in your comments in class; however, open discussion and dialogue are our goals.

Conflict 101 fulfills the University General Education requirement for Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Class work and examinations, due dates and grades for the Semester

Assignments,	Due Dates:	% of Grade,
Attendance and Participation	Assessed throughout the semester	5%
2 Short essays (3 pages each)	Due Sept. 16 & Oct. 21 (25%)	25% total
Two tests (test I -15% test II- 20%)	Held in class (Sept 30 & Nov. 16 (35%)	15%; 20%
One (1) Group Case Study Assignment	Class presentations (Nov. 30-Dec. 9) (Submit copy on Presentation day)	25%
Negotiation & Mediation role plays	In class participation	10%

Make up exams and extensions of time for assignments will be arranged ONLY for documented personal illness or family emergency. **Students with documented disabilities should make arrangements early in the term by contacting Professor Simmons.**

Guidelines for preparing the short essays will be provided in class and on the course WebCT page. The short essays will focus on real conflicts that you have analyzed on your own.

You are expected to abide by George Mason University's Honor Code in preparing all work for this class. If you have any questions about Honor Code issues (e.g., whether you are permitted to discuss an assignment with a fellow student) or are uncertain about how to cite a source, or if you have observed Honor Code violations, please contact Professor Simmons.

### Required Readings

- (1) Pruitt, D.G. & S. Kim, (2004) *Social Conflict: Escalation Stalemate, and Settlement*. New York: McGraw-Hill
- (2) Assefa, H. and Wahrhaftig, P. (1990), *The MOVE Crisis in Philadelphia: Extremist Groups and Conflict Resolution*. Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburg Press.
- (3) Schellenberg, A James (1996) *Conflict Resolution: Theory, Research and Practice*. State University of New York Press, Albany
- (4) Introductory Reader in Conflict Analysis and Resolution: Contents listed below and available on GMU Library electronic reserve.

It is highly recommended for this course, and for your undergraduate career, that you seek out information about current events in your community and in the world generally. This may be achieved by reading daily---either in had copy or online---*The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, or by listening to the BBC or National Public Radio News among others. Please make your readings a central part of our discussions in class and do not be afraid to bring in views that stir up conversation, but keep in mind that real respect for the other is a prized ideal that is recommended and encouraged at all times.

Guidelines for preparing course assignments, such as the final paper will be provided in this class. For the conflict map presentation, students will work in teams to present a map of a conflict of their

choice. Team members will all receive the same grade for the presentation. *If you are having difficulties coordinating as a team, you should seek assistance from the instructor.*

### **Schedule of Topics and Readings**

#### **Aug. 31;**

Introduction to the Course

#### **Defining Conflict**

#### **Sept. 2; What is conflict?**

Pruitt 3-14; Schellenberg 7-16

#### **Sept. 4; Nature and Sources of Conflict I**

Pruitt 15-36;

#### **Sept. 7; Labor Day, university closed**

#### **Sept. 9; Nature and Sources of Conflict II**

Pruitt 56-62; Burton 32-40

#### **Sept. 11; Nature and Sources of Conflict III**

Mennonite Conciliation Services 78-83

#### **Sept 14; Nature and Sources of Conflict IV**

Lipset 77-90

#### **Analyzing Conflict:**

#### **Sept. 16; First Short Paper Due in Class**

Strategies I

Pruitt 37-46

#### **Sept. 18; Strategies II**

Pruitt 47-57

#### **Sept. 21; Tactics I**

Pruitt 63-73

#### **Sept. 23 Tactics II**

Pruitt 74-84

Video

#### **Approaches to Analyzing Conflict; Sources, Actors, Issues, Dynamics**

Kriesberg 51-77

**Sept. 21;** Individual Characteristics  
Schellenberg 39-57

**Sept. 23;** Social Process  
Schellenberg 59-78

**Sept. 25; Social Structural**  
Galtung 39-53; Schellenberg 79-102

Sept. 28; Formal Theories  
Schellenberg 103-116

**Sept. 30; EXAM ONE IN CLASS**

**Oct. 2; Case Study: Conflict over Resources, Nigeria—Niger Delta (Group Paper)**

Conflict in Process:

**Oct. 5;** Social Mobilization and Conflict – Guest Speaker

**Oct. 7;** Gender Differences and Conflict Styles  
Augsburger 164-186

**Oct. 9;** Belief, Culture and Peace-building  
Avruch, 3-16; 39-42

**Oct.12;** Columbus Day Recess, no class

**Oct. 13;** Pruitt 87-120, Asefa and Wahrhaftig, 3-44

**Oct.14:** Pruitt Asefa and Wahrhaftig, 119-152

**Oct. 16;** Pruitt 121-150, Asefa and Wahrhaftig, 45-62

**Oct. 21; Second Short Paper Due in Class**

**Oct. 21;** Pruitt 151-168; Asefa and Wahrhaftig, 63-96;

**Oct. 23;** Pruitt 171-188;

Resolving Conflict

**Oct. 26;** Alternatives to Violence; Historical Perspectives  
Burton 1-5: in International Peace Studies  
Vol. 3 No. 1 (1998)

**Oct. 28;** Focusing on the Local Conflict; Mediation  
Kolb 17-60

**Oct. 30:** Focusing on Resolution: Community Dialogue Processes  
Kolb 395-426

**Oct. 19;** Social Mobilization and Conflict – Guest Speaker  
Kolb 245-278

**Nov. 2;** Mediation Workshop  
Kolb 17-60

**Nov. 4;** Mediation continued  
Third Parties and Conflict Resolution  
Ekwuachi-Ford 112-169; Augsburg 187-228

**Nov.6;** Group, Organizational and Public conflicts  
(Negotiation: group participation I)  
Kolb 61-104

**Nov. 9;** Group, Organizational and Public conflicts  
(Negotiation: group participation II)  
Kolb 105-145

**Nov.11;** Transforming Ethno-political Conflict  
Negotiation Continued III  
Jimmy Cater in Kolb 375- 392;

**Nov. 13;** International Conflict  
(And Exam Prep)  
Kolb 427-458; Miall et al., 95-121

**Nov.16;** EXAM TWO IN CLASS

**Nov.18;** Zones of Peace Workshop (Guest Speaker)

**Nov. 20;** Peace and Reconciliation  
Lederach 841-854; Augsburg 259-288

**Nov.23;** Global Problems and Global Solutions (1998) Vol. 3 NO. 1  
Lerche III 47-64 –article in International Journal of Peace Studies  
“The Conflicts of Globalization”

## **Nov. 25—29 Thanks Giving Break—No classes**

### Case Study Class Presentations and Submission of Group Paper

**Nov. 30:** Group Presentation (G1)

Articles –Niger Delta Conflict <http://www.usip.org/resources/bringing-peace-niger-delta>

**Dec. 2;** Group Presentation (G 2) <http://www.usip.org/resources/bringing-peace-niger-delta>

**Dec. 4;** Group Presentation (G 3) <http://www.usip.org/resources/bringing-peace-niger-delta>

**Dec. 7;** Group Presentation (G 4) <http://www.usip.org/resources/bringing-peace-niger-delta>

**Dec. 9;** Group Presentation (G 5) <http://www.usip.org/resources/bringing-peace-niger-delta>

Note: More materials on the Niger Delta will be provided in class. Students are also required to research this case on their own as part of their group assignment. Each group is expected to thoroughly research this case, (particularly the aspect that relates to each groups' area of focus) as they embark on their group assignment. If you have any questions or encounter any difficulty feel free to ask the instructor. All individually well researched and presented articles on this topic will earn each student a bonus mark. The maximum that can be earned is 5%.

**Dec. 11;** Wrap Up

### **Introductory Reader**

1. White, T.H. 1987. The Passing of Camelot. Extract in: *Philosophical Perspectives on Peace*. H. Kainz, ed. Pp. 247-252. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press.
2. Avruch .K Culture and Conflict Resolution 1998. United State Institute of Peace, Washington DC.
3. Augsburger, D.W. 1992, *conflict Mediation across Cultures: Pathways and Patterns*; Westminster/John Knox Press Louisville, Kentucky
4. Burton, John. 1997. Needs Theory. In: *Violence Explained*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 32-40.
5. Mennonite Conciliation Service (MCS). 2000. *Mediation and facilitation training manual*. 4th Ed. Akron, PA: Mennonite Conciliation Service.
6. Galtung, Johan. 1999. Cultural Violence. In: *Violence and its Alternatives: An Interdisciplinary Reader*. Steger and Lind, Ed. New York: St. Martin's. Pp. 39-53.
7. Kriesberg, Louis. 1997. The Development of the Conflict Resolution Field. In: *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques*. I. William Zartman and J Rasmussen, eds. Washington, DC: USIP Press. Pp. 51-77.
8. Kriesberg, L. 1998, *Constructive Conflicts, From Escalation to Resolution*; Rowman & Littlefield Inc. England
9. Bush, Robert A. Baruch and Joseph P. Folger. 2005. A Transformative View of Conflict and Mediation. In *The Promise of Mediation: A Transformative Approach to Conflict*. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass
10. Abramson, Lauren and Donald Moore. 2002. The Psychology of Community Conferencing." In: *Repairing Communities through Restorative Justice*. J. Perry, ed. Lanham, MD: American

Correctional Association. Pp. 123-139.

11. Schlegel, Alice. 2004. Contentious But Not Violent: The Hopi of Northern Arizona. In *Keeping the Peace: Conflict Resolution and Peaceful Societies Around the World*. G. Kemp and D. Fry, eds. Pp. 19-34. New York: Rutledge.
12. Miall, Hugh, et al. 1999. Preventing Violent Conflict. In: *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*. New York: Polity Press. Pp. 95-121.
13. Volkan, Vamik. 1997. Chosen Trauma: Unresolved Mourning. In: *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism*. Boulder: West view Press. Pp. 36-49.
14. Lederach, John Paul. 2001. Civil Society and Reconciliation. In *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*. Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, ed. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press. Pp. 841-854.
15. Lipset, Seymour Martin, 1960. *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics*. New York: Doubleday & Company. Pp 77-99
16. Meldrum, A. 2004. *Where we have Hope: A Memoir of Zimbabwe*, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press
17. Kolb et al. 1994. When Talk Works: Profiles of Mediators, Jossey-Bass; Pp 17-60; 395-426
18. Schellenberg J.A. 1996. *Conflict Resolution; Theory, Research and Practice*; State University of New York Press, Albany NY.
19. Zartman, W, I., 2000. Introduction: African Traditional Conflict Medicine. In: I. William Zartman (ed). *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts, African Conflict "Medicine."* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000, 1-11