

**CONF 101, Section 006  
Conflict and Our World:  
Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution  
Spring 2010**

Instructor: Terrence Lyons  
Wednesdays, 10:30 -1:15  
Classroom: Robinson Hall B220

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9:30 -  
10:20, or by appointment

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 recent events in Darfur and Afghanistan. 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 or the Solidarity movement in Poland in the 1980s. Our increased interconnection as a global society has 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 reconciliation and sustainable peacebuilding. We will highlight the societal, structural, and cultural factors that play a part in conflict and its resolution. At the end of the course, you should be able to analyze a conflict, appreciate the contextual factors that influence conflict, know the major conflict resolution techniques, and understand the complexity 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 material 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 idea.

Classroom etiquette: Come to class on time and prepared. Turn off your cell phones, pagers, beepers, 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. Do not surf the net. Be mindful of the sensitivities of others in your comments in class; however, open discussion and dialogue are our goal.

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

**Assignments, Percentages of Grade, Due Dates**

Attendance and Participation	Assessed throughout the semester	10%
2 Short Papers (3 pages)	February 17 and March 31	30%
One In-Class Midterm Exam	March 3	20%
Final Exam	May 5	40%

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 Lyons.

Guidelines for preparing the short essays will be provided in class. The first short essay will focus on real conflicts that you have analyzed on your own. The second will focus on the video that will be shown in class on March 17.

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 Lyons.

**Required Readings:**

These two books have been ordered at the University Bookstore.

Feargal Cochrane. *Ending Wars*. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2008

Dean G. Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim. *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement*. 3rd Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill 2004

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 through reading daily – either in hard copy or online – *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, or by listening to the BBC news 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 an ideal that is often more difficult to achieve than it is to intend.

## **Student Resources**

### GMU Writing Center

“The Writing Center seeks to foster a writing climate on campus and beyond by offering free writing support to George Mason students, faculty, staff and alumni. No matter what your writing abilities are, writing specialists can help you develop the skills you need to become a successful writer.

Free services include: One-on-one 45 minute sessions with a writing specialist; online writing lab; one-on-one sessions with an ESL specialist; workshops on such topics as documenting sources, grammar and punctuation; writing handouts on a variety of subjects; a library of handbooks and writing manuals; [and an] online chat with a tutor about papers submitted to the Online Writing Lab” (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>).

### Disability Support Services

Any student with documented learning disabilities or other conditions that may affect academic performance should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with the Office of Disability Support Services (993-2474) to determine the possible accommodations you might need; and 2) contact her or his instructor to discuss reasonable accommodations.

“George Mason University is committed to providing appropriate services and accommodations that allow self-identified students with disabilities to access programs and activities at the university as stated in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. To achieve this goal, the university maintains and supports the Disability Resource Center Office, which is responsible for assuring that students receive the services and accommodations to which they are entitled. The professional staff of the Disability Resource Center Office coordinate services for students with disabilities, determine reasonable services and accommodations on the basis of disability, and act as a liaison between students and faculty/administration on concerns relating to services and accommodations” (<http://www.gmu.edu/departments/advising/dss.html>).

### Library Services

The ICAR library liaison is Gretchen Reynolds ([greynol3@gmu.edu](mailto:greynol3@gmu.edu)). Do not hesitate to contact her with specific questions about holdings and research in these areas or whom to contact for materials still in the Fenwick Library on the Fairfax Campus.

## **Schedule of Topics and Readings**

January 20 - Introduction

January 27 - What is Conflict?

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, pp. 3-36; 56-62

February 3 - Nature and Sources of Conflict I

Readings: Burton, 32-40; Galtung 39-53 (available through e-reserves)

February 10 – Nature and Sources II

Readings: Collier, 197-216; Volkan, 19-28, 36-49 (available through e-reserves)

February 17 - Approaches to Analyzing and Resolving Conflict

### **FIRST SHORT PAPER DUE**

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, pp. 37-56; 63-84; Kriesberg, 455-476 (available through e-reserves)

February 22-24 – Optional – War on the Silver Screen Film Festival

Johnson Center Cinema, 7 PM. Students may write a conflict analysis on one of the three films to be shown as part of this series for up to five points of extra credit.

The films are "Sergeant Rutledge" (1960), directed by John Ford; "Glory" (1989), directed Edward Zwick; and "Dead Presidents" directed by Albert and Allen Hughes.

February 24 - Case Study: Afghanistan

Readings: List of relevant websites and research is at the end of the syllabus.

March 3 – Mid-Term Exam and Case Study TBD:

**MID-TERM EXAM** – In class exam will be held during the first 75 minutes of the class (10:30 – 11:45).

Video: TBD

This video will be the basis for your second short paper that is due March 31. It will also be placed on reserve in the Johnson Center Reserve Room.

March 10 – No Class – Enjoy Spring Break

March 17 – Mediation and Interactive Problem Solving

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, 189-225; Zartman and Touval, 437-454; Kelman, 97-110. Available through e-reserves.

March 24 - Alternatives to Violence

Readings: Ackerman and Duvall, 305-333. Available through e-reserves.

March 31- Contemporary War and Peace Negotiations

**SECOND SHORT PAPER DUE**

Cochrane – 12-38; 70-100

April 7 - Reconciliation

Readings: Lederach – 23-35. Available through e-reserves.

April 14 – Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

Readings: Daniel, 1-22 (available on web); Barnett, Kim, O'Donnell, and Sitea, 35-58 (Mason e-journals); Reychler, 3-15 (e-reserves).

April 21 - Post-Conflict Reconstruction; Truth and Reconciliation

Reading: Cochrane – 150-183; Barsalou, 1-12, Seils and Wierda, 1-20 (available on web).

April 28 - Integration

May 5 – **FINAL EXAM**

This will be an in-class exam held in our regular classroom at the regular time (10:30 -1:15, Robinson Hall B220)

**E-Reserve/E-Journal/Internet Sites Reading List**

The following readings are available on e-reserves, internet sites, or e-journals:

Burton, John. 1997. "Needs Theory." In *Violence Explained*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 32-40.

Galtung, Johan. 1999. "Cultural Violence." In *Violence and its Alternatives: An Interdisciplinary Reader*. Steger and Lind, ed. New York: St. Martin's, 39-53.

Collier, Paul, 2007. "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy." In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Olser Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 197-216.

Kriesberg, Louis. 2001. "Contemporary Conflict Resolution," In, *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Olser Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 455-476.

Volkan, Vamik. 1997. "Ethnic Tents: Descriptions of Large-Group Identities," and "Chosen Trauma: Unresolved Mourning." In *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 19-28, 36-49.

Zartman, I. William, and Touval, Saadia. 2007. "International Mediation." In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Olser Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 437-454.

Kelman, Herbert C. 2001. "Interactive Problem Solving in the Middle East." In *Peacebuilding: A Field Guide*. Luc Reyhler and Thania Paffenholz, eds. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 97-110.

Daniel, Donald C. F. "Wither Peace Operations?" United States Institute of Peace Special Report, <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr215.pdf>

Franke, Volker C. and Warnecke, Andrea. June 2009. "Building Peace: An Inventory of UN Peace Missions Since the End of the Cold War." In *International Peacekeeping* (e-journals)

Barnett, Michael, Hunjoon Kim, Madalene O'Donnell, and Laura Sitea. March 2007. "Peacebuilding: What is in a Name?" In *Global Governance* (e-journals)

Ackerman, Peter and Jack Duvall. 2000. "The American South: Campaign for Civil Rights." In *A Force More Powerful*. New York: Palgrave, 305-333.

Lederach, John Paul. 1997. "Reconciliation: the Building of Relationship." In *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 23-35.

Reyhler, Luc. 2001. "From Conflict to Sustainable Peacebuilding." In *Peacebuilding: A Field Guide*. Luc Reyhler and Thania Paffenholz, eds. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 3-15.

Barsalou, Judy. April 2005. "Trauma and Transitional Justice in Divided Societies," United States Institute of Peace Special Report 135, <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr135.pdf>

Seils, Paul and Wierda, Marieke. June 2005. "The International Criminal Court and Conflict Mediation." *Occasional Paper Series*, International Center for Transitional Justice, <http://www.ictj.org/images/content/1/1/119.pdf>

### **Afghanistan Case Study Readings**

Barnett Rubin, "The Transformation of the Afghan State,"  
<http://www.usip.org/files/resources/foa.pdf>

Library of Congress, "Afghanistan: Country Profile,"  
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Afghanistan.pdf>

Afghanistan Conflict Monitor  
[http://www.afghanconflictmonitor.org/conflict\\_profiles.html](http://www.afghanconflictmonitor.org/conflict_profiles.html)

"Afghanistan and Pakistan on the Brink: Framing US Policy Options," CSIS report, February 2009  
[http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/090221\\_barton-afpakonthebrink.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/090221_barton-afpakonthebrink.pdf)

Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy" <http://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

"The AfPak Daily Briefing," <http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/dailybrief>