# CONF330:
## *Community, Group, and Organizational Conflict Analysis and Resolution*
## Fall 2012

Wednesdays 10:30-1:10pm, Innovation 206

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This course examines conflict within social structures at the group, organizational, and community levels, as well as the ways that conflicts affect groups, organizations, and communities. This will be achieved through the interdisciplinary investigation of theory, research, and practice in group/community settings. This course both provides a bridge between interpersonal and international conflict work as well as illuminating the ways in which conflict at this level differs from micro or macro work.

The course will follow a learning community model, where all members of the class, including the professor and any guests, embark on a cooperative learning experience. This involves preparation by all involved and a commitment to different learning and participation styles.

**Learning Objectives**

- To understand the relationship of social groups *to* conflict and to understand the relationship of social groups *and* conflict.
- To develop the skills necessary to begin to consider interventions in this context.
- To reflect critically on your own participation in groups and you own contributions to conflict and its resolution.
- To develop specific insight into community and organizational conflict in the American context.
- To understand how group, organizational, and community work can contribute to a career in conflict resolution.

**NCLC 304 Required Texts**

- Block, Peter. 2009. *Community: The Structure of Belonging*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
- Brubaker, David R. and Ruth Hoover Zimmerman. 2009. *The Little Book of Healthy*

*Organizations: Tools for Understanding and Transforming Your Organization*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

- Hedges, Chris & Joe Sacco. 2012. *Days of Destruction, Days of Revolt*. New York: Nation Books.
- Kriesberg, Louis. 1998. *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Additional readings will be made available on Blackboard or through E-reserves.

**COURSE ASSESSMENT:**
- Participation                           100 points
- Discussion Community           200 points
- Class Simulation                 150 points
- Book Project                     200 points
- Mid-term Exam                100 points
- Final Exam                       200 points
- Final Reflection                   50 points

**Participation** = 100 points.  Collaborative learning is an important feature of learning communities.  Students are expected to attend class, to participate actively and responsibly, to hand in all assignments when due, and to support other students in the learning process.  Each student will be an active learner, coming fully prepared to engage in that enterprise by raising questions and suggesting answers or tracks to follow in search of answers.  Students are expected to read and be prepared to discuss the assigned texts.  Note-taking is very important, and students are expected to take effective notes.  There may be various in-class assignments which may be graded as a component of participation.  Instructors will evaluate students for individual contributions to our collective enterprise.

**Discussion Community** = 200 points.  In order to support our classroom work and your own reflective learning, we will participate in a collaborative discussion community throughout the semester.  Questions for each week will be posted on Blackboard.  These questions will relate to our reading for the week as well as short reflective or research tasks (i.e., find an example of the principle we are reading about).  Each week, you will answer this question in a post of at least 250-words on Blackboard.  Each post will be worth 10 points and is due before the end of the day Monday.  You are expected to read each other's posts and add comments on at least two of your classmates' posts before class on Wednesday.  These comments will each be worth 2 point, so 14 points are available each week.  This assignment will start before our second class meeting and continue for 14 weeks, so the total points available will be 14 posts (140) + 28 comments (56) + 4 free points to make it round to 200.  Students will receive full credit for completing the assignment each week.  Posts will not be evaluated for quality, provided they meet the length requirement and answer the question.  Late posts (before the end of class) will receive ½ credit, but comments cannot be made up.

**Class Simulation** = 200 points. The class will participate in a detailed, in class simulation that covers two class sessions (DATES). The success of this project relies on the preparation and participation of all students. You will receive 50 points for participating each day. You will also complete a 1,500-word reflection on the simulation, worth 100 points. Details and instructions about the reflection will be presented in class.

**Book Project** = 200 points. We will be examining cases from Days of Destruction, Days of Revolt throughout the semester. After we have finished these cases, you will select one of the first four chapters (Pine Ridge, SD; Camden, NJ; Welch, WV; or Immokalee, FL) and write on this case. This paper is intended to be reflective and oriented toward practice, so you will focus on your response to the case, how you would use your skills and earlier coursework to analyze conflict in the community, and how you would begin to think about an intervention in the community. This project should integrate what you have learned in the course with your other experiences and coursework.

Students have the option of completing this on their own and producing a 2,000-word essay or working in small groups (no more than 4). If you choose to work in groups, you need to notify your instructor of the members of your group and the case you will be writing on by 11/7. Groups are expected to produce longer essays (3,000 words for 2 members, 4,000 words for 3 and 5,000 words for 4) and these essays should take into account that you are approaching the conflict as a group, utilizing all members as resources.

**Mid-term and final exam** = 100 and 200 points. There will be two take-home, short essay examinations. The mid-term will contain four questions and you will answer two in 750-1,000-word essays. The final exam will contain five questions and you will complete three 750-1,000-word essays. Exam topics will be posts on Blackboard.

**Final Reflection** = 50 points. At the end of class, you will complete a 1,250-word reflection on the course, the topic of group/organizational/community conflict, how your work has related to your education, and how it relates to your expected future work. Details will be provided in class. This is not intended to be a paper where you summarize the topics we have covered, but instead an integrated essay about your educational experience.

**Extra Credit.** Opportunities for extra credit may arise during the semester related to events on campus and in the community. These will be announced during class and students can earn as much as 25 points for completing an extra credit assignment and writing a 750-word reflection on the experience. Although there may be several opportunities, students can only complete two extra credit assignments for points during the semester (50 points total).

➔ **Late Work**. Papers and other assignments are to be <u>submitted through Blackboard before the start of class</u>. Paper copies or emailed submissions will not be accepted. **Late work will be reduced one letter grade per day**. No work will be accepted over one week late without a valid written medical excuse or notice of death in the family. The instructor does not have a mailbox at NCC.

➔ **Format for Assignments** All assignments are due before class as noted in the daily schedule and must be submitted through Blackboard. They must be typed, but double-spacing is not necessary. You must correctly and consistently use a recognized citation style, such as MLA, APA, Chicago Manual, etc. For a summary of the styles, visit http://classweb.gmu.edu/nccwg/researchguide.htm.

**Grading Scale**

| A+ | 1000 – 980 | B+ | 899 – 880 | C+ | 799 - 780 | D | 699 - 600 | F | 599 - 0 |
|----|-----------|----|-----------|----|-----------|---|-----------|---|---------|
| A | 979 – 921 | B | 879 – 821 | C | 779 - 721 | | | | |
| A- | 920 – 900 | B- | 820 – 800 | C- | 720 - 700 | | | | |

**Useful Resources**
**On-Line Writing Guide.** http://classweb.gmu.edu/nccwg/

This guide will help you achieve success as a writer during your learning experience in New Century College and beyond. Integrative Studies courses involve learning and writing from multiple perspectives and disciplines and negotiating knowledge boundaries. Your ultimate goal as a New Century College student is to use writing to make meaning of the knowledge you are acquiring, but also to integrate and connect what you are learning across disciplinary boundaries. Use this resource to aid you in achieving this goal.

**A note on the Honor Code**. 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.

S-CAR 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. S-CAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it.

**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 CAR library liaison is Melissa Johnson (703.993.2212). 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.

## Course/Reading Schedule

Week 1, 8/29: Introducing the Course
     NO READING

Week 2, 9/5: Groups, Organizations, Communities
     Reading: Block, Chapters 1-4
     *Discussion Community starts 9/3*

Week 3, 9/12: Alternative Groups/Communities: Heterogeneous Conflicts, Online Communities
     Block 5-7
     Katsch, Ethan and Janet Rifkin.  2001.  "Chapter 1: The Impact of Cyberspace on
Disputes and Dispute Resolution." In *Online Dispute Resolution*.  San Francisco, Jossey-Bass: 17-44.

Week 4, 9/19: Sources of Group/Org/Community Conflict
     Kriesberg 1-3
     Hedges & Sacco, 1

Week 5, 9/26: Dynamics of Group/Org/Community Conflict
     Kriesberg 6-7, Joanne Martin article
     Hedges & Sacco, 2

Week 6, 10/3: Power/Marginalization/Justice in Group/Org/Community Conflict
     Hedges & Sacco, 3-4
     Walker, Polly O. 2004. Decolonizing Conflict Resolution: Addressing the Ontological
Violence of Westernization. *American Indian Quarterly* 28(3/4): 527-549
     Schoeny, Mara and Wallace Warfield.  2000.  Reconnecting Systems Maintenance with
Social Justice: A Critical Role for Conflict Resolution. *Negotiation Journal* 16(3): 253-268.
     *Mid-Term Questions Handed Out*

Week 7, 10/10: Simulation, Week 1
     Block 8-10
     *Mid-Term Exam Due*

Week 8, 10/17: Simulation, Week 2
     Kriesberg, 4-5

Week 9, 10/24: CR in Organizations and Communities: What Happens Now?
     Kriesberg 8-9
     *Simulation Reflection Due*

Week 10, 10/31: Systemic Approaches
     *The Little Book of Healthy Organizations*

Week 11, 11/7: Dialogue and Narratives

      Hall, Bradford 'J,' and Mutsumi Noguchi.  1993.  "Intercultural Conflict: A Case Study." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 17: 399-413.

      Polletta, Francesca.  1998.  "Contenting Stories: Narrative in Social Movements." *Qualitative Sociology* 21(4): 419-446.

      Parker, Priya Narayan. 2006. "Sustained Dialogue: How Students Are Changing Their Own Racial Climate." *About Campus* 11, no. 1:17–23.


Week 12, 11/14: Public Conflict Resolution/Consensus

      Laue, James and Gerald Cormick.  1978.  "The Ethics of Intervention in Community Disputes." In *Ethics of Social Intervention*, Gordon Bermant, Herbert C. Kelman, and Donald P. Warwick (eds). London: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation.

      Dukes, E. Franklin.  2004.  "What We Know about Environmental Conflict Resolution: An Analysis Based on Research." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 22(1-2): 191-220

      LeBaron, Michelle and Nike Carstarphen.  1997.  "Negotiating Intractable Conflict: The Common Ground Dialogue Process and Abortion." *Negotiation Journal*, October: 341-361.

Week 13, 11/20: NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 14, 11/28: Community Organizing/Activism

      Hedges & Sacco 5

      Schutz, Aaron and Marie G. Sandy, 2011. "Saul Alinsky: The 'Father' of Community Organizing" in *Collective Action for Social Change: An Introduction to Community Organizing*. New York: Palgrave, 93-107.

      Kahn, Si.  2012.  "United the Divided, Divided the United" & "Creative Community Organizing's Top 20."  In *Creative Community Organizing: A Guide for Rabble-Rousers, Activists, and Quiet Lovers of Justice*.  7-20, 193-196

      *Book Project Due*

Week 15, 12/5: Trustbuilding, Community Building, Wrapping up the Class

      Block 11-12

      Six, Frédérique, and Arndt Sorge, 2008. "Creating a High-Trust Organization: An Exploration into Organizational Policies That Stimulate Interpersonal Trust Building." *Journal of Management Studies* 45(5): 857–884.

      *Final Reflection Due*

      *Final Discussion Community Post*

      *Exam Questions Handed Out*

12/12: Final Exams due on Blackboard, Class does not meet.