

CONF 642: Integration of Theory and Practice

Fall 2012

Class Time: Thursday, 4:30-7:10 pm

Location: Arlington: Founders Hall 467

Instructor: Ho-Won Jeong, E-mail: hwjeong@gmu.edu

COURSE OUTLINE

This course is designed to help S-CAR MS Students pull their understanding of conflict analysis and resolution together. In particular, we will focus on how we can develop an integrated approach to theory, research methods, and practice in such a way as to review what has been developed in the field of conflict studies. As this field is multi disciplinary in nature, our discussion will include the contributions of different disciplinary areas to the development of approaches to conflict analysis and resolution. In addition, we will examine how different theories can be applied to particular sets of problems, both domestic and international. Therefore, this course will provide an integrative process of student learning with holistic orientations of our understanding of the field.

In our educational enterprise, students will be asked about what we know and do not know and the methods to find out what we don't know about the complexities of each conflict. In the pursuit of a coherent knowledge base, students are expected to weave together “bits and pieces” from their understanding of theories on 1) the causes and conditions of conflict initiation and escalation at all levels; 2) exploration of hypothesized approaches and processes for responding to conflicts in different domains; 3) analysis of actual approaches and processes for conflict management and resolution; and 4) appropriate research tools for applying theory to practice and feeding the results of practice back to theory.

The format of the class consists of lectures, readings, class presentations, exercises, and written assignments. In assisting students in building their ability to develop independent thinking and practice, CONF 642 relies on interactive class dynamics based on weekly contributions, informed by appropriate preparation, and reciprocal feedback. At the end of the semester, we will have opportunities to bring all the lessons together to integrate them into a coherent whole: conflict resolution theory and practice, supported by research methods. In facilitating the application of theory to practice and the feedback from practice to theory, we will develop the methods of evaluation.

REQUIREMENTS

Students will be asked to make individual class participation and presentations based on the reading assignment (10% of the total grade), make a presentation on practice along with a written report (15%). For their mid term exam, students will be asked to integrate the first half of the semester's class learning (25%). The final term paper will focus on the comparison and integration of various

theoretical components into a coherent whole along with the assessment of their applicability in 10 single spaced pages (50% of final grade). Specific due dates of the above assignments will be announced if they are not mentioned in the syllabus. Excessive absence (more than three times) can result in either a failure or lower grade (with the exceptions of family illness or unforeseen accidents). The late submission of assignments will be subjected to a reduced grade. Students are required to pay full attention to the university honor code (copied and attached at the end of this syllabus).

Textbooks available at the GMU bookstore

Jeong, Howon (2008) *Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis*, London: Sage

Jeong, Howon (2009) *Conflict Management and Resolution*, London: Routledge

Course Schedule

Week 1: Introduction: Course Overview

Week 2: The Status of the Field

Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis, Chapters 1-4

Conflict Management and Resolution, Chapters 1-2

Week 3: Conflict Transformation: Power, Identity and Structure

Conflict Management and Resolution, Chapters 3-6

Suggested Reading:

Christopher R. Mitchell, 'Beyond Resolution: What Does Conflict Transformation Actually Transform?' *Peace and Conflict Studies*, May 2002

<http://www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/CM83PCS.htm>

Week 4: Conflict System and Process

Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis,
Conflict System: Chapters 6-7

Conflict Process: Chapters 5, 8-11

Week 5: Methods for Resolving Conflict: Negotiation

Conflict Management and Resolution, Chapters 7-8

Suggested Reading:

P. TERRENCE HOPMANN, 'Two Paradigms of Negotiation: Bargaining and Problem Solving', *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* November 1995 vol. 542 no. 1 24-47

Linda L. Putnam, 'Negotiation and Discourse Analysis' *Negotiation Journal*, April 2010
Volume 26, Issue 2, pages 145–154

Week 6: Mediation and Facilitation

Conflict Management and Resolution, Chapters 9-11

Suggested Readings:

Susan L. Podziba, 'The Human Side of Complex Public Policy Mediation', *Negotiation Journal*, October 2003, Volume 19, Number 4, 285-290

Week 7: Peace Building: Concepts and Applications

Jeong, *Peacebuilding in Post-conflict Societies*

Suggested Reading

Luc Reyhler (2002) 'Peace Architecture' *Peace and Conflict Studies*
<http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/pcs/table83.htm>

Week 8: Mid-term Exam

Week 9: Individualized Studies and Group Meetings

Week 10: Presentation on Practice

The development of training manuals and presentations

Reference Material

Elise Boulding (2002), 'A Journey into the Future: Imagining a Nonviolent World'
<http://www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/CM83PCS.htm>

Internet Resources: Negotiation Simulation Exercises

<http://www.publicinternationallaw.org/areas/peacebuilding/simulations/>
[Indonesia/Aceh](#), [Democratic Republic of Congo](#), [Iraq Formation of Regions](#), [Iraq Constitution](#), [Iraq Oil Distribution](#), [Kashmir](#), [Kosovo Final Status](#), [Nepal](#), [Sri Lanka](#), [Sudan](#)

Week 11: Advocacy Roles and Ethics: Intervention in asymmetric conflict

Video presentations

Approaches to advocacy

Discussion about the methods for formulation of issues

Suggested Reading:

Peace and Conflict Studies (1999), vol. 6, special theme issue on Conflict Resolution and Social Justice

<http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/pcs/table62.htm>

Roy, Beth. (2009) Chapter 2, "Thinking about Power." In *Conflict Transformation and Restorative Justice Manual: Foundations and Skills for Mediation and Facilitations*, 5th edition, Mennonite Central Committee, Office of Justice and Peacebuilding, Akron, PA

Nader, Laura. 1998. Harmony Models and the Construction of Law. In *Conflict Resolution: Cross Cultural Perspectives*. Kevin Avruch, Peter W. Black, and Joseph A. Scimecca, eds. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

Week 12: Research Proposal Writing

Twenty minutes presentation by each student

Recommended Reading:

Babbie, Earl. 1992. *The Practice of Social Research*. 6th edition, Chapter 4, "Research Design," pp 88-112. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing

Druckman, Daniel. 2005. *Doing Research*. London: Sage Publications

Week 13: Thanksgiving

Week 14: Final Paper Due

Integration: The paper assignment: what has been accomplished in conflict studies in recent years? How could we legitimize the need for its existence? What types of knowledge have been insufficiently developed or missing in the evolution of the field? What needs to be done in the development of the field? What areas does the field need to focus more on? The presentation of diagrams, etc. is strongly encouraged.

Week 15: Advanced Research and Practice

Identification of research methods suitable for conflict resolution

Suggested Reading:

Marsick, Victoria. 2000. Learning Through Reflection. In *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice*.

Schein, Edgar. 1998. Communication Processes. In *Process Consultation Volume I*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley Publishing Company.

Honor Code and Plagiarism:

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.

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