

Conflict and Our World

Course: CONF 101.001, Fall 2013 *Time:* Friday, 10:30 – 1:15

Location: University Hall 1202 *Instructor:* Ned Lazarus

Office Hours: TBD, at Northeast Modules

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Course Description

Across all human societies, conflict is an integral part of daily life. The stakes may be relatively minor, such as siblings arguing over the last cookie; more serious, such as debates over gun control or immigration policy in the United States; or of global consequence, such as collective struggles over ideology and power, sovereignty and self-determination. Conflict can be constructive, focusing attention on neglected voices or social injustice, and driving cultural and political change. It can also be destructive, damaging relationships, polarizing societies or escalating into violence and war. In our increasingly interconnected world, it is crucial to develop effective methods to understand the sources and dynamics of conflicts, and to deal with conflict productively.

This course is designed to familiarize students with the interdisciplinary field of conflict analysis and resolution, providing an overview of core concepts of contemporary theory and practice. The course will examine frameworks for analyzing the origins and processes of social conflict, and leading practical approaches to the conduct and evaluation of conflict resolution interventions. Our study will encompass interpersonal, intergroup and international levels of analysis, and highlight the roles of culture, identity, narrative, perception, relational dynamics and social structure. The first half of the course emphasizes conflict analysis; the second half emphasizes approaches to conflict resolution.

The course will employ diverse methods and media, including lectures, discussions, interactive exercises, film, music, written assignments, research presentations and a final research paper. The course features three Experiential Learning Activities (ELAs) that provide opportunities for practical application of course concepts. Active participation in every class is essential; readings are always necessary but never sufficient for learning the material. **All students are required to be present, in every sense of the word, for all class sessions.**

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

Learning Objectives

The course will ideally challenge and encourage you to:

- 1) Grasp and apply core concepts of conflict analysis and resolution;
- 2) Learn and apply basic conflict analysis frameworks and skills;
- 3) Become familiar with key types of Conflict Resolution interventions;
- 4) Identify specific cases or types of conflict of personal importance or interest, and use the course materials to study these in depth;
- 5) Build relationships of mutual respect and dialogue within the class.

Guidelines

Classroom Etiquette: Come to each session on time and well-prepared. Turn off all personal electronic devices for the duration of class (use will be permitted during a 10 minute break in the middle of each session). **Laptops may be used exclusively for note-taking purposes during lecture sessions only; they must otherwise remain closed.** While using a laptop, email and internet browsers must remain closed and bells and whistles off. In discussions, active engagement in open, respectful and substantive dialogue is expected.

Absence and extensions: Make-up exams and extensions on assignments must be requested in advance, and will be permitted exclusively in cases of documented personal illness or genuine personal urgency; unexcused absences or late assignments will affect grades. Students with documented disabilities should make arrangements early in the term by contacting Professor Lazarus.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

- 1) Class Preparation and Participation (includes ELAs): 20% of total grade;
- 2) Short Papers: 15% of total grade;
- 3) Mid-Term Exam: 20% of total grade;
- 4) Final Presentation: 15% of total grade;
- 5) Final Paper: 30% of total grade.

Weekly Assignments and Participation

The quality of the course experience will be determined by our entire group's preparation and active participation. As stated above, all students are expected

to be present, in every sense of the word, for every class. There are readings assigned for each week, often accompanied by discussion questions. On four occasions, readings are to be addressed through short written assignments:

1. *Introductory Papers* – due by electronic submission at class time on Friday, 9.6 (there will be no class meeting that day).
2. *Conflict Strategy Papers* – due by electronic submission before class on Friday, 9.23. Students will discuss their papers in class on the same day.
3. *ELA Reflection Paper I* – Due electronically before class on Friday, 10.4.
4. *ELA Reflection Paper II* – Due electronically before class on Friday, 11.1.

Detailed guidelines for these assignments will be provided in class. Students should be prepared to present the substance of their papers in class.

Mid-term Take-Home Exam: Distributed 10.4; Due 10.15

Students will complete a take-home mid-term exam covering material from the first half of the course. The exam questions will be distributed after class on Friday, October 4th; answers will be due through electronic submission no later than midnight on Tuesday, October 15th, in order to facilitate midterm grading.

Final Case Studies and Presentations (Presentations on 12.6; Case Studies Due 12.16)

Students will apply course concepts and analytical approaches to conduct an in-depth study of a specific conflict or type of conflict of personal interest or importance, including thorough analysis and detailed proposals for intervention. Case studies will be presented and reviewed by the class on December 6, and final research papers submitted by December 16.

Course Readings

The majority of course readings will be available on e-reserves, and/or provided via e-mail. You are encouraged to print only what you need, in order to conserve the finite resources of your budgets and our planet. There is one required text available for purchase at the bookstore or online.

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

Academic Integrity

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 www.academicintegrity.gmu.edu. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review. With specific regard to plagiarism, three fundamental 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 proper citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. If you have questions about appropriate methods of attribution or citation, please talk with the professor.

S-CAR requires that all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course 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.

Grading Scale

Cumulative Points	Grade
97-100	A+
93-96	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
70-79	C (+- as above)
60-70	D
<60	F

*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 School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution library liaison is Gretchen Reynolds (greynol3@gmu.edu). Feel free to contact her with specific questions about holdings, research or other questions re: library contacts or materials.

Course Map

DATE	CLASS THEMES	ASSIGNMENTS DUE	ETC.
1. 8/30	Introductions, Goals, Defining Conflict		
9/6	*No Class*	Short Paper I	*Rosh Hasbanab*
2. 9/13	<i>Analysis</i> : Sources, Nature of Conflict		
3. 9/20	<i>Analysis</i> : Strategies and Interpersonal Conflict	Short Paper II	
4. 9/27	<i>Analysis</i> : Dynamics of Conflict Escalation		ELA: Mediated Perceptions
5. 10/4	<i>Analysis</i> : Conflict Narratives	Short Paper III: ELA Reflections	Distribution of Mid-term Exam
6. 10/11	<i>Analysis</i> : Conflict Mapping		ELA: Conflict Mapping
7. 10/18	<i>Resolution</i> : History and Lexicon of the Field	Mid-term Exam Due 10.15	
8. 10/25	<i>Resolution</i> : Third Party Intervention		ELA: Conflict Intervention
9. 11/1	<i>Resolution</i> : Dialogue & Reconciliation	Short Paper IV: ELA Reflections	Film: <i>Encounter Point</i>
10. 11/8	<i>Resolution</i> : Nonviolence & Civil Resistance		Film: <i>A Force More Powerful</i>
11. 11/15	<i>Resolution</i> : Religion, Conflict & Peace		Film: <i>The Imam & The Pastor</i>
12. 11/22	<i>Resolution</i> : Evaluation		
11/29	*No Class*		*Thanksgiving*
13. 12/6	Conclusion/Integration	Research Presentations	
12/16		Final Research Paper Due	

*Detailed Course Schedule****1. August 30—Course and Class Introductions**

- No Required Readings.
- *Recommended:* Lazarus, “Jerusalem Diary”:
<http://www.slate.com/id/2058163/entry/2058168/>

No Class September 6: Rosh Hashbanab – First Short Paper Due

- Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, Chapters 1-2 (pp. 3-36).

2. September 13—*Analysis:* Sources and Definitions of Conflict

- Galtung, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research,” pp. 167-172.
- Mead, “Warfare is Only an Invention—Not a Biological Necessity.”
- Collier, “Economic Causes of Conflict,” pp. 197-216.
- Burton, “Needs Theory,” pp. 32-40.
- Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, Chapter 1: The Diplomacy of Violence, pp. 1-6.
- Volkan, “Ethnic Tents,” and “Chosen Trauma.”

3. September 20—*Analysis:* Conflict Strategies

- Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, Chapters 3-4 (pp. 37-84).
- Interpersonal Conflict reading

Written Assignment Due: Conflict —Personal Theory and Practice

4. September 27—*Analysis:* Dynamics of Conflict Escalation

ELA: Mediated Perceptions

- Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, Chapters 5-7 (pp. 87-151).

5. October 4—*Analysis:* Identity and Narrative

- Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, Chapter 8 (pp. 151-168)
- Kelman, “The Interdependence of Israeli and Palestinian National Identities.”
- Ryunosuke Akutagawa, *In a Grove* (1922), translated by Takashi Kojima.

6. Oct. 11—*Analysis: Conflict Mapping*

ELA: *Community At Odds Part I – Conflict Mapping*

- Conflict Mapping: Definitions and Frameworks (will be provided)

7. October 18—*Resolution: The Conflict Analysis and Resolution Field*

- Ramsbotham et al., *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, Chaps. 5-8 (pp. 106-214).
- John W. McDonald, “Multi-Track Diplomacy” (2003), available at http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/multi-track_diplomacy/
- *Recommended:* Lederach, *Building Peace*, chaps. 5-6 (pp. 63-86).

7. October 25—*Resolution: Third Party Interventions*

ELA: *Community At Odds Part II – Intervention Design*

- Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, Chapters 9-10 (pp. 171-225)
- Kelman and Cohen, “The Problem-Solving Workshop.”
- Fisher, Ury and Patton, *Getting to Yes*. Excerpts.
- *Recommended:* Fisher, "Interactive Conflict Resolution."

8. November 1—*Resolution: Dialogue and Reconciliation*

Film: *Encounter Point*

- Lederach, *Building Peace*, chapters 3-4 (pp. 23-61).
- Abu-Nimer and Lazarus, “The Peacebuilder’s Paradox and the Dynamics of Dialogue.”
- *Recommended:* Kelman, “Reconciliation from a Social-Psychological Perspective.”

9. November 8— *Resolution: Nonviolence & Civil Resistance*

Film: *A Force More Powerful*

- Sharp, *Waging Nonviolent Struggle*, Chapter 1: Facing Acute Conflict, pp. 13-24. Available at: <http://www.wagingnonviolentstruggle.com/>

- Stephan and Chenoweth, “Why Civil Resistance Works, pp. 7-14, 42-44. Available at: http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/PDF/IS3301_pp007-044_Stephan_Chenoweth.pdf.
- Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” 1963.
- Selected Quotes from Mohandas K. Gandhi.
- *Recommended Counterpoint*: Fanon, “Concerning Violence.” Excerpts.

10. November 15—*Resolution: Religion, Conflict & Peacebuilding*

Film: *The Imam and the Pastor*

- Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*: “Powerful Medicine” (1-19) and part of “The Growing End of an Argument” (pp. 25-41).
- Duffy Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, Chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-47).

11. November 22—*Resolution: Evaluating Conflict Interventions*

- Pearson d’Estree et al., “Changing the Debate About ‘Success’ in Conflict Resolution Efforts.”
- Church and Rogers, *Designing for Results*, Chapter 2: *Understanding Change*, pp. 10-24. Available at: <http://www.sfcg.org/documents/dmechapter2.pdf>
- Gavriel Salomon, “Does Peace Education Make a Difference in Contexts of Intractable Conflict?” *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 10, no. 3 (2004): 257–274.
- *Recommended*: Lazarus, “Evaluating Long-Term Impact in Volatile Context.”

No Class November 29: Happy Thanksgiving

12. December 6—*Integration*

Research Presentations

Final Paper Due December 16

Note: Schedule is guaranteed to evolve over the course of the semester. All updates will be announced via advance email notification. Changes will not increase your workload.

Bibliography of Readings (in alphabetical order of author's names)

Required Readings

- Mohammed Abu-Nimer and Ned Lazarus, "The Peacebuilder's Paradox and the Dynamics of Dialogue," in Kuriansky (ed.), *Beyond Bullets and Bombs: Grassroots Peacebuilding between Palestinians and Israelis* (Praeger 2007), 19-32.
- Ryunosuke Akutagawa, *In a Grove* (1922), translated by Takashi Kojima.
- R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000).
- John Burton, "Needs Theory," in *Violence Explained* (Manchester: Manchester University Press: 1997), 32-40.
- Cheyanne Church and Mark Rogers, *Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs* (Washington, D.C.: Search for Common Ground, 2006): Chapter 2: *Understanding Change*, pp. 10-24. Available at: <http://www.sfcg.org/documents/dmechapter2.pdf>
- Paul Collier, "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: USIP Press, 2007), 197-216.
- Roger Fisher, William Ury and Bruce Patton, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* (2nd edition: Penguin Books, 1991). Excerpts.
- Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research" in *Journal of Peace Research* 6 (3): 1969, 167-172.
- Mohandas K. Gandhi, Selected Quotes.
- Herbert C. Kelman, "The Interdependence of Israeli and Palestinian National Identities: The Role of the Other in Existential Conflicts" in *Journal of Social Issues* 55 (3): Fall 1999, 581-600.
- Herbert C. Kelman and Stephen P. Cohen, "The Problem-Solving Workshop: A Social-Psychological Contribution to the Resolution of International Conflicts," in *Journal of Peace Research* 13 (2): 1976, 77-90.
- Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail," 1963.
- John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington DC: USIP Press, 1997).
- John W. McDonald, "Multi-Track Diplomacy" (2003), available at http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/multi-track_diplomacy/

- Margaret Mead, “Warfare is Only an Invention—Not a Biological Necessity,” excerpted in David P. Barash (ed.), *Approaches to Peace: A Reader in Peace Studies* (Oxford: Oxford Press, 2000), 19-22. Pub. 1940.
- Tamra Pearson d’Estree, Larissa A. Fast, Joshua N. Weiss, Monica S. Jakobsen, “Changing the Debate About ‘Success’ in Conflict Resolution Efforts,” in *Negotiation Journal* 17 (2): April 2001, 101-113.
- Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts—2nd Edition* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2005).
- Gavriel Salomon, “Does Peace Education Make a Difference in Contexts of Intractable Conflict?” *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 10, no. 3 (2004): 257–274.
- Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), Chapter 1: The Diplomacy of Violence.
- Gene Sharp, *Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20th Century Practice and 21st Century Potential* (Manchester, NH: Extended Horizons, 2005), Chapter 1: Facing Acute Conflict, pp. 13-24. Available at: <http://www.wagingnonviolentstruggle.com/>
- Maria J. Stephan and Erica Chenoweth, “Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict,” in *International Security* 33 (1): Summer 2008, pp. 7-14, 42-44. Available at: http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/PDF/IS3301_pp007-044_Stephan_Chenoweth.pdf.
- Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shah, *God’s Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (Norton, 2011).
- Vamik Volkan, “Ethnic Tents: Descriptions of Large-Group Identities,” and “Chosen Trauma: Unresolved Mourning,” in *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 19-28, 36-49.

Recommended Readings

- Ronald J. Fisher, "Interactive Conflict Resolution" in *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques*, Zartman and Rasmussen (eds.) (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997) 239-272.
- Herbert C. Kelman, “Reconciliation from a Social-Psychological Perspective,” in Nadler, Malloy & Fisher (eds.), *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Reconciliation* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 15-32.

- Frantz Fanon, “Concerning Violence,” in *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. C. Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1966). Excerpts.
- Ned Lazarus, “Jerusalem Diary,” *Slate*, November 2001, <http://www.slate.com/id/2058163/entry/2058168/>.
- Ned Lazarus, “Evaluating Long-Term Impact in Volatile Context: The Case of Seeds of Peace,” in Wisler and Del Felice (eds.), *Peace Education Evaluation* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Press, 2013).

Films

- *Encounter Point* (2006). Directed by Ronit Avni and Julia Bacha. Produced by Joline Makhoul and Nahanni Rous. Just Vision.
- *The Imam and the Pastor* (2006). Directed by Alan Channer. FLT Films.
- *A Force More Powerful* (1999). Directed by Steve York. York Zimmerman Films.