

CONF 340-005
GLOBAL CONFLICT ANALYSIS and RESOLUTION

Spring 2013

Monday: 7:20 pm - 10:00 pm

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Location: Robinson B-218

Office Hours: by appointment

Objectives:

As an emerging field of social research and practice, Conflict Analysis and Resolution has grown fairly rapid since the 1990s. The end of the Cold War era has ushered in an era of globalization, instant global communication, and more inter-connectedness of nations, social groups, and individuals around the world. It has also nurtured a new wave of identity-based and cultural conflicts and energized contentious politics and collective action at the hands of non-state actors. As a result, there has been an increasing shift from inter-state wars to intra-state conflicts with deeper foundation of causality. Unlike the 20th century which was controlled mainly by the top-down power paradigm being sustained by political realism, the beginning of the new century has revealed an opposite bottom-up shake-up of economic and political structures with the guidance of advocacy groups and civil society. The open-ended Arab Uprisings, Occupy Wall Street, and other ambitious social movements are recent examples of these forces which have called for social change and added to the complexity of intra-state conflicts; while the United Nations system is still preoccupied with violent confrontations and struggling with putting the fire out in several hot spots around the world.

The multi- and inter-disciplinary nature of the field entails the need for a nuanced knowledge of the works of the parents of the field, both theorists and practitioners, as well as other concepts derived from Psychology, Sociology, International Relations, Political Science and other social sciences. Before considering the objective of resolving, or at least transforming, social conflict, the imperative of analyzing issues, motives, positions, and trajectories requires familiarity with leading conceptual frameworks and practical approaches. Accordingly, the objectives of this course include:

- Exploring conflict theory and identifying the underlying causes and emergence of deep-rooted protracted conflicts
- Examining conflict processes and various types, symptoms and patterns of conflict dynamics and conflict escalation
- Analyzing inter-connectedness of the causes, conduct, and effects of violent conflict using four leading analytical frameworks in the field
- Studying various models for intervention including prevention, management, settlement, resolution and transformation
- Help students think critically, systematically and analytically about intra-state and inter-state conflicts in different regions and in a variety of contexts

This course will be divided roughly in four parts. **Part One** [weeks 1-5] will consist of a review of the field's development and main conceptual engagements. **Part two** [week 6] will focus on four leading analytical frameworks of conflict resolution. In **Part Three** [weeks 8-10], we will study the emerging challenges of conflict resolution in the post-Cold War and post-9/11 eras. Toward the end of the course, we will devote **Part Four** [weeks 11-14] to various processes of resolution or transformation and the need for evaluation of the third-party intervention. The course will also include a multi-session simulation that will allow us to see some of the dynamics of global conflict in action such as the deepening Syrian Crisis.

The Course Format:

The course will be run as a combined lecture and seminar with an emphasis on discussion of the readings and students' reflections. It is therefore imperative that students read the assigned material prior to class. Active participation based on *thoughtful consideration* of the literature will be expected. Missing more than one or two classes will inevitably reduce your overall participation and hence result in a lower participation grade.

There are two categories of reading material: two textbooks and chapters selected from other publications. In choosing Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall's book and Lederach's book, we will seek an intellectual journey of integrating what can be claimed as *scientific* and what is *personally crafted* as an artistic added value in the practice of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. In addition, students are encouraged to follow and critically examine daily news reports on current events related to social conflict, and read relevant articles in *Journal of Conflictology*, *American Sociological Review*, *World Politics*, *Foreign Policy*, *Foreign Affairs*, and other leading journals.

Course Materials:

- ✓ Ramsbotham et al. *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, [3rd edition, 2011], Polity Press
[Ramsbotham et al. hereafter]
- ✓ Lederach, J. Paul. *The Moral Imagination* (2010 or 2005) Oxford University Press
[Lederach hereafter]

Parents of the Field:

There is another resource for this course I'd like to bring to your attention. Chris Mitchell and Jannie Botes have worked for several years on what they call "The Parents of the Field Project." They videotaped interviews with many of the field's founders. I encourage you to visit the site and when you have time to view one or more of the interviews. It will put you viscerally in touch with some of the names you have learned about in the abstract, over the years. You will also discover names you didn't know or learn much about (e.g., Betty Reardon, J. David Singer, and Chadwick Alger...). Consider anyone or several of these videos as a "recommended viewing": <http://icar.gmu.edu/parents>

Honor Code Policy:

I expect you to understand and abide by the University's policy regarding the Honor Code, which may be found at <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode>. In short, the University's policy regarding the Honor Code prohibits any form of cheating on exams or written assignments. It also prohibits plagiarism, so be certain to properly cite all information that you use in your papers.

Exercises, Grades, and Course Requirements:

1. **Participation:** You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss readings. In evaluating class participation, the instructor will look for evidence that you have done the readings with sufficient attention that you can contribute to the discussion. This will be worth **15% of your final grade**.
2. **In-class Presentation and Discussion Leading:** Each group of three students shall prepare a class presentation of the readings assigned for the week, as well as three discussion questions. Each group will have 20 minutes to provide an overview of the readings and present their basic points, strengths and weaknesses. After the presentation, the discussion leaders will give three or four questions relevant to the readings and will lead a discussion among their colleagues for another 15 minutes. More specifically in your presentation you shall:
 - Provide an overview of the readings, emphasizing the main points discussed by the authors.
 - Critically reflect on the readings and present their main strengths and weaknesses
 - During the presentation students are expected to draw links between the readings and real-world experience, using, if applicable, examples of current global conflicts; In other words, students –among others– should answer the following question: how do theoretical concepts discussed in our readings apply to real world situations as we currently experience them?
 - Discussion questions should reflect good understanding of the readings and be thought-provoking, so as for the audience to be more engaged in the discussion

Discussion leading performance will be evaluated on the following basis:

- How well the presentation captures the basic insights offered in the readings
 - Demonstration of ability to critically evaluate and reflect on the readings
 - How well the presenter manages to keep the audience engaged in the discussion.
- In-class presentations will be worth **15% of your final grade**.
3. **Experiential Learning Activity (ELA):** In the frames of the course, we will conduct an Experiential Learning Activity on the ongoing Syrian Crisis. In this role play activity, you will simulate a S-CAR summit aimed at discussing possible ways of analyzing, resolving, or at least ending the increasing bloodshed with the massacres of little numbers every week inside Syria. This simulation uses this two-year old violent conflict, with increasing

deaths and civilian devastation, as a contemporary scenario to enhance your understanding of the complex dynamics of conflict and negotiation at intra-state, interstate, regional and international levels, and the roles of identity and interests as potential drivers of escalation or resolution.

Each group of three will prepare their notes to represent these stakeholders: 1) the Syrian government, 2) Opposition: the Syrian Free Army (SFA) and other armed forces, 3) Civilians: casualties, IDPs, and refugees, 4) Diaspora: The Syrian Coalition Council, the Syrian National Council, etc., 5) the United Nations/Arab League – Kofi Annan and Lakhdar Brahimi, 6) US/EU, 7) International media, and 8) the rest of the class will play the role of S-CAR analysts and third-party interveners. Sound preparation and effective participation in this ELA is worth **20% of your final grade**.

4. **Mid-term Exam:** This will be an in-class exam and will be worth **20% of the final grade**. It will include a combination of multiple choice questions, brief definition of key concepts we will cover in our class, and essay questions. You will be given 75 minutes to take the exam. The exam shall evaluate your familiarity with various conflict theories and models studied thus far [Monday, April 1].
5. **Research Paper:** You will write a 10-page research paper on a case study. In this paper, drawing from theories we will learn in our class, you will present and discuss the basic parameters of a contemporary conflict and offer suggestions for resolving the conflict. It is an individually written paper, demonstrating your own reflections on the application of theory to a conflict of your choice. Your paper must aim to do the following:
 - Analyze a conflict drawing on one or two theories discussed in class. In our class we will explore a number of analytic frameworks that may help you in this task.
 - Recommend a number of potential conflict interventions that may help parties in conflict deal effectively with the issues they face.

Further details on the structure of the final paper, as well as on other specifics will be given later in the semester. Your final research paper will be evaluated on the following basis:

a) Demonstration of Knowledge of the given conflict system: Throughout the paper you need to show that you have done a sound research and that you understand the different parameters of the conflict you explore (background, parties, causes, issues, relationships, dynamics etc).

b) Right Use of Theories and Concepts we have learned in class: Your writing needs to reflect a clear understanding of the theories you have chosen to use in your case. In your paper you also need to explain why the theories you use are relevant to the case you explore.

c) Recommendations: Again here the intention is to demonstrate that you have understood the different types of intervention and when each of those types is used (matching the reality on the ground to the right type of intervention). Here, being realistic and exploring ethical concerns is important.

d) Overall Organization and Clarity: The reader needs to be able to follow easily what is being presented in the paper. Thus, your paper needs to be a cohesive narrative rather than an unstructured body of information. You may have done an excellent job in your research, but throwing information out there without a structure and in a disorganized way does not help the reader understand what you write.

e) Correct and Consistent Citation Style: this is an academic paper and this needs to be reflected in the overall format. If you are not sure about which style to use or if you have questions, you can contact the GMU Writing Center [e-mail wcenter@gmu.edu, or call 703-993-4491].

A one-page proposal of what you plan to research with a tentative bibliography is due by email by Monday, April 1st. **The final research paper is due on May 14th**, and you are expected to send it to me electronically. Please, pay attention to grammar, spellings, typographical mistakes and consistency in citations, as it shall have an impact on your grade. The final research paper shall be worth **25% of your final grade**.

f) Critical Reflection: Reflection is a major mechanism of learning from experience and an indispensable ingredient of self-development. When carried out critically, reflection enables individuals to deeply comprehend and evaluate new information, thus, developing new meaning perspectives. These transformative dimensions of reflection may be particularly useful to social scientists in general, and conflict analysts in particular, as it allows for deeper understanding of the social world and of complex conflict realities that we are called to analyze. For this reason, starting from our second meeting, we will be spending the last 5-10 minutes of each class writing individually one or two paragraphs as a reflection of what we learned in each meeting. This will be worth **5% of your final grade**

Summary:

- ✓ Class Participation: 15%
- ✓ In-class Discussion Leading: 15%
- ✓ Reflection Paragraphs: 5%
- ✓ Mid-term Exam: 20% (April 1st)
- ✓ ELA Participation: 20%
- ✓ Final Research Paper: 25% (Due date: May 14th)

Academic Honesty and Collaboration:

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.

Plagiarism is a **serious offense**, and all written work for this course should include proper citations in a standard citation format (MLA, APA, etc.). *If you are unsure about how to cite a direct quotation or concept from course or outside readings, then ask for help.* "I wasn't sure how to cite a source, so I left out the reference," is not an acceptable defense for plagiarism. Copies of common style manuals are available at the GMU library reference desk or online at <http://library.duke.edu/research/citing/workscited/>

Late Work: Class assignments that are submitted late can be penalized by one point for each day they are late (i.e. B instead of B+). Late papers will be accepted only in cases of documented personal illness or family emergency. If this is the case, you must email a copy at my GMU email address per the extension given to you.

Paper Format: Papers for the course should be typed, double-spaced, have 1" margins, and use a common 12-point font. Headers should include only the course number, CONF 340-005. **Papers should have a title; include your name and the instructor's name.** Sources should be cited using a single standard academic citation format.

Schedule of Classes

Week 1: Jan. 28

Introduction

- Self-introductions
- Course protocol, overview and expectations
- Class discussions: Growth of CAR and Complexity of Global Conflict

Part 1: Concepts of Contemporary Conflict and Conflict Resolution

Week 2: Feb. 4 Key Concepts in Conflict Resolution

- ✓ **Ramsbotham et al.**, "Introduction to Conflict Resolution", chapter 1, pp. 3-34 & "Conflict Resolution: Origins, Foundations and Development of the Field," chapter 2, pp. 35-62
- ✓ **Rubenstein, Richard.** "Conflict Resolution and Power Politics", 1996, Working paper 10, ICAR [emailed]

Week 3: Feb. 11 Theories of Conflict

- ✓ **Ramsbotham et al.** "Understanding Contemporary Conflict Resolution", chapter 4, pp. 94-122
- ✓ **Burton, John W.** "Resolution of Conflict", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 1. (March, 1972), pp. 5-29 [emailed]
- ✓ **Arbour, Louise.** "10 conflicts to watch in 2013", *Foreign Policy* [emailed]

Week 4: Feb. 18 Identity and Inter-group Dynamics and Conflict

- ✓ **Ramsbotham, O.** (2005) "The Analysis of Protracted Social Conflict: A tribute to Edward Azar". *Review of International Studies*, 31 (1), pp. 109-126 [emailed]
- ✓ **Burton, John.** (1998) "Conflict Resolution: The Human Dimension." *The International Journal of Peace Studies*, ISSN 1085 7494, Volume 3. No 1
http://www.gmu.edu/academic/ijps/vol3_1/burton.htm

Week 5: Feb. 25 Basic Human Needs

- ✓ **Maslow, A. H.** (1943) "A Theory of Human Motivation", *Psychological Review*, 50, pp. 370-396 [emailed]
- ✓ **Burton, John.** (1979) "Institutional Values & Human Needs" in *Deviance, Terrorism, and War*, pp. 55-84 [emailed]
- ✓ **Rubenstein, Richard E.** (1996) "Basic Human Needs: Steps Toward Further Theory Development" www.gmu.edu/academic/ijps/vol6_1/Rubenstein.htm

Part 2: Analytical Frameworks of Conflict Resolution

Week 6: March 4 Four Approaches to Mapping Conflict

- ✓ **Sandole, Dennis J.D.** (1998) "A Comprehensive Mapping of Conflict and Conflict Resolution: A Three Pillar Approach." *Peace and Conflict Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2, December, pp. 1-30. <http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/pcs/sandole>

- ✓ **Chris Mitchell**, (1990) SPITCEROW: Framework for the Analysis of Conflict Systems
<http://pcmsauhaifa.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/mitchell-basic-framework-for-conflict-analysis-spitcerow.pdf>
- ✓ **Wehr, Paul**. Conflict Mapping <http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/treatment/cmap.htm>
- ✓ **Bright, L. Shady**. (2000) The Conflict Mapping Chart
http://www.cmsupport.org/conflictmapping/conflictmappingchart_shayBright.pdf

Week 7: March 11 ***Spring Break [No class]***

Part 3: ***Contemporary Challenges of Conflict Resolution***

Week 8: March 18 **Culture, Meaning-making and Conflict**

- ✓ **Ramsbotham et al.** "Culture, Religion and Conflict Resolution", chapter 15, pp-332-346
- ✓ **Avruch, Kevin**. (2012) "Culture Theory, Culture Clash, and the Practice of Conflict Resolution", in *Context and Pretext in Conflict Resolution: Culture, Identity, Power, and Practice*, Paradigm publishers, chapter 6, pp. 81-95 (Emailed)
- ✓ **Huntington, Samuel P.** (1993) "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*. Summer, vol. 72 (Emailed)

Week 9: March 25 **Post-Cold War and Post-911 Challenges in Conflict Resolution I**

Terrorism:

- ✓ **Ramsbotham et al.**, "Terror and Global Justice" Chapter 11, pp. 249-264
- ✓ **Stares, Paul B. and Yacoubian, Mona**. "Rethinking "War on terror": new Approaches to Conflict Prevention and management in the Post-9/11 World", in *Leashing Dogs or War*, 2007 (Emailed)

Power:

- ✓ **Hayward, Clarissa. & Lukes, Steven**. "Nobody to shoot? Power, Structure, and Agency: A dialogue", *Journal of Power*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April 2008, 5–20 (Emailed)

Economy:

- ✓ **Collier, Paul**. (2000) "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy", The World Bank (Emailed)

Week 10: April 1 **Post-Cold War and Post-911 Challenges in Conflict Resolution II**

Social Mobilization:

- ✓ **Tarrow, Sidney** (1998) "Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics, (2nd ed.), Cambridge University Press, pp. 10-25 and 71-90 (Emailed)

- ✓ **Rubenstein, Richard.** (2012). “What is Occupy? A Conflict Analysis Perspective” Unrest Magazine, Retrieved from: <http://www.unrestmag.com/what-is-occupy-a-conflictanalysis-perspective/>

Media:

- ✓ **Ramsbotham et al.** “Conflict Resolution and the Media the Communications Revolution”, chapter 17, pp. 359-373
- ✓ **Fouéré et al.**, “Preparing for Peace: Communications in Conflict Resolution”, *OSCE Talks*, December 2012 <http://www.osce.org/secretariat/98116?download=true>

- **In-class exam – 75 minutes**

Part 4: Third-party Intervention and Ethics

Week 11: April 8 3rd Party Intervention, Peacekeeping and Peacemaking

- ✓ **Ramsbotham et al.**, “Ending Violent Conflict Peacemaking”, ch. 7, pp. 171-197
- ✓ **Ghali, Boutros.** (1992) “An Agenda for Peace”, http://www.unrol.org/files/A_47_277.pdf
- ✓ **Lederach**, Chapters. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, pp. 3-50

Week 12: April 15 Peacebuilding and Reconciliation

- ✓ **Ramsbotham et al.**, “Reconciliation”, chapter 10, pp.246-261
- ✓ **Lederach**, Chapters. 6, 7, 8, and 5, pp. 51-86

**Week 13: April 22 Ethics in Conflict Resolution
Experiential Learning Activity [preparation]**

- ✓ **Ramsbotham et al.**, “Conflict Resolution and the Ethics of Intervention”, chapter 14, pp. 317-331
- ✓ **Leaning, Jennifer.** “The Dilemma of Neutrality”, keynote address given at the Humanitarian Health Conference, 8 September 2008, in Hanover, New Hampshire (Emailed)

**Week 14: April 29 Experiential Learning Activity (ELA):
S-CAR Summit - The Syrian Crisis**

Final Paper due by email May 14th at 6 pm

