

CONF 101, Section 1 (Fall 2014)
Conflict and Our World:
Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution

Instructor: Will David, Ph.D.
Fridays, 10:30 am - 1:10 pm
Classroom: MTB 1004

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Office: Robinson B365 (by appointment)
Hours: After class or by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

Conflict is commonplace in society. Sometimes conflict is an annoyance, such as arguing with a sibling over the Xbox; sometimes it is more serious, such as the debate over gun control or immigration; and sometimes it is tragic, as in events in Ukraine, Gaza, and Iraq, among others. 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., the Solidarity movement in Poland, or perhaps the Occupy Wall Street and Arab Spring movements. Given the interconnectedness of global society, we need to determine how we can deal with conflict productively.

This course introduces the interdisciplinary study of conflict analysis and resolution. We will examine how and why conflicts occur in human society, and what we can do to mitigate their destructive aspects while reinforcing their constructive potential. 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 a wide variety of contemporary conflicts. Regardless of your major, you should leave this course thinking differently and more in depth about conflict. CONF 101 fulfills the General Education requirement for Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Class Expectations

Effective Preparation. Complete the readings prior to class, preferably leaving time to reflect on the material. Read to comprehend. You should be able to summarize the main points from the readings and films upon request. Please contact me by email or ask in class if you do not understand a term or idea. Check blackboard often. I will post readings, class notes or summaries, class presentations, and other material that may help you to better understand the readings, select research paper topics, or write better papers. I may revise the syllabus during the semester to take advantage of opportunities to accelerate learning or to provide additional time to contend with more challenging material. Revisions will be announced in class and via blackboard. Stay informed about current events by reading newspapers such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, listening to BBC News or NPR, and using a variety of internet news and magazine resources to contrast their coverage of the same issues. As you consider

contemporary conflicts, apply concepts you learn in the course in order to analyze the conflict and develop a strategy to resolve it. In previous CONF 101 courses, students established discussion groups outside of class to promote better understanding of the material.

Consistent Attendance. I expect you to attend class. Attendance is not only mandatory but 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, and your classmates will contribute greatly to your learning as well. The course includes Experiential Learning Activities (ELAs). These are essential to the course and you will have graded assignments related to them. Documented illness and family emergencies will be excused. *Each unexcused absence will result in a 5 point reduction in your final course grade.* Please notify me as soon as possible if you are unable to make it to class. With prior approval, I will permit you to attend the other CONF 101 section that I am teaching (001 or 006) to make up a missed class or to preclude missing a class for an excused absence.

Classroom Protocol. Arrive on time and attend to personal needs before or after class, or during a short break midway through each class. Turn off cell phones and other electronic devices. Computers and tablets may be used for course-specific purposes only, and must not disturb others. Be mindful of the sensitivities of others when contributing to discussions; however, critical thinking and open dialogue are our goals.

Written assignments. I expect well-written, thoughtful papers that generally adhere to the prescribed length. Edit your papers carefully as spelling and grammatical errors will lower your score. Papers must be typed and double-spaced, using Times New Roman 12-point font and one-inch paper margins. Properly cite material and ideas that are not your own. If in doubt, please ask me. I run all papers through Safe Assign software on blackboard. I prefer Chicago-style author-year citations, but use the citation method common to your primary field of study. Endnotes, bibliography, and title pages do not count towards the assigned paper length. Number your pages. Title pages are not required, but you are welcome to design and format them as you please. Footers must include CONF 101-001, the date turned in, and your name (e.g. CONF 101-001/10 Oct 14/Will David). Papers (paper and digital) are due no later than the beginning of class on the due date. Extensions will be arranged only for documented personal illness or family emergencies. Otherwise, late papers will have 5 points deducted from the final score for each day past the due date.

Required Texts (3)

Assefa, Hizkias and Paul Wahrhaftig. 1990. *The MOVE Crisis in Philadelphia: Extremist Groups and Conflict Resolution*. Pittsburg: The University of Pittsburg Press.

Nordstrom, Carolyn. 2004. *Shadows of War: Violence, Power, and International Profiteering in the Twenty-First Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

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

Other required readings/films will be available through e-reserves (ER), e-journal (EJ), and the internet (I), or distributed in class or via blackboard. The link for ER is on blackboard.

Summary of Requirements

Participation	10%	All semester
Essay #1	10%	26 September
Research Paper (Part I)	20%	10 October
Reflection Paper #1	10%	17 October
Essay #2	10%	7 November
Reflection Paper #2	10%	21 November
Research Paper (Parts I, II, and III)	30%	5 December

Participation. Your contributions in class and responses to questions about the material constitute 10% of your grade. Some material will only be covered in class. I will evaluate your participation based on the quality of your efforts, not on the quantity of remarks. Typically, the best remarks are succinct, relevant to the topic, and enhance our collective learning. You should integrate course concepts into your remarks and synthesize information from this and other courses as well as from your own research and experiences. Generally, I dislike quizzes and tests as an approach to teaching. However, I will use quizzes to ensure adequate class preparation if the quality of discussion indicates inadequate preparation. Quiz scores will count towards the participation grade. Quizzes missed during unexcused absences cannot be made up and will count as a zero.

Essays. Essays will be take-home, open book assignments. I will provide the topic/question for the essay two weeks prior to the due date. These essays will require you to integrate material from the course into your essay responses. Each of the essays is worth 10% of your grade and will be 3 to 4 pages in length.

Reflection Papers. Both of these 3-page papers will be related to Experiential Learning Activities (ELAs) conducted in class, and each is worth 10% of your grade.

Research Paper. This 10-12 page paper will analyze a current conflict (part I), identify intervention objectives (part II), and propose a conflict intervention strategy (part III). You should select a conflict of interest to you, but it must be approved by me no later than 26 September. I recommend that you do some preliminary research and draft a tentative outline, and then consult with me for further guidance. Part I is due in class on 10 October and is worth 20% of your grade. The completed research paper (parts I, II, and III) are due no later than 5 December and is 30% of your grade. I will discuss the research paper in greater detail in class, including the requirement for a short, in-class presentation.

A Note on Extra Credit. I prefer that students focus on the requirements rather than on extra credit. However, students often remind me that “things happen.” In that spirit, I will consider opportunities to earn extra credit. These may take the form of short papers, news editorials, reports based on attending a course-related conference, or article summaries and a brief

presentation to the class. For example, John Paul Lederach, a prominent scholar and practitioner in the field of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, will be the Lynch lecturer on Wednesday, November 19, 7:20-9:00 pm at Founders Hall in Arlington. Attendance and a subsequent summary and reflection paper would merit extra credit. Speak with me if you are interested in extra credit. Extra credit will not substitute for missed assignments.

Class Schedule

29 August – Introduction to the Course – What is Conflict?

- Readings: Syllabus; Van Gelder, 41-46 (EJ); Pruitt and Kim, 3-36; Nordstrom, 5-17
- Assignment: On a 3x5 note card write the one word that comes to mind when you hear the word 'conflict.' On the other side, briefly describe a metaphor that captures your conception of 'conflict' as you currently understand it. **Bring the card to class.**

5 September – Nature and Sources I

- Readings: Burton, 32-40 (ER); Nordstrom, 19-69; Galtung, 39-53 (EJ)

12 September – Nature and Sources II

- Readings: Collier, 197-216 (ER); Gurr, 131-160 (ER)
- Class debate (greed versus grievance)
- Question for Essay #1 provided

19 September – Nature and Sources III

- Readings: Volkan 19-29, 36-49 (ER); Nordstrom, 71-137

26 September – Approaches to Analyzing Conflict I

- Readings: Pruitt and Kim, 37-82; Kriesberg and Dayton, 1-22 (ER)
- Essay #1 DUE
- No later than today: Research Paper Topic Approved

3 October – Approaches to Analyzing Conflict II

- Readings: Pruitt and Kim, 85-188
- Experiential Learning Activity-Analyzing Liberia

10 October – Third Party Roles

- Readings: Pruitt and Kim, 226-258; Cochrane, 39-69 (ER); Barsky, 215-225 (ER)
- Experiential Learning Activity-Analyzing Liberia
- Research Paper (part I) DUE
- Mid-Course Conferences

17 October – Mediation and Interactive Problem Solving

- Readings: Pruitt and Kim, 189-225; Zartman and Touval, 437-454 (ER); Kelman, 389-413 (EJ)
- Reflection Paper #1 DUE
- Mid-Course Conferences

24 October – Alternatives to Violence

- Readings: Ackerman and Duvall, 305-333 (ER)
- You should have finished reading *The Move Crisis*
- Question for Essay #2 provided
- Mid-Course Conferences

31 October – Peacebuilding I – Civil Society

- Readings: Barnes, 7-24 (ER), Belloni, 182-210 (ER)
- Watch prior to class: *Responding to Conflict, The Wajir Story (I)*
- Mid-Course Conferences

7 November – Peacebuilding II – Reconciliation

- Readings: Lederach, 841-854 (ER); Ball 719-736 (ER)
- Watch prior to class: *Gulu: The Struggle for Peace (I)*
- Experiential Learning Activity-Designing an Intervention
- Essay #2 DUE

14 November – Peacebuilding III – Statebuilding and Liberal Peace

- Readings: Hampson and Mendeloff, 679-700 (ER)
- Watch prior to class: *The War We are Living (I)*
- Experiential Learning Activity-Designing an Intervention
- Presentations of research paper summaries

21 November – Peacebuilding IV – War and Peace

- Readings: Nordstrom, 141-173; Goldstein, 1-10 (ER)
- Reflection Paper #2 DUE
- Presentations of research paper summaries

5 December – Integration and New Directions

- Readings: TBD
- Research Paper (parts I, II, and III)
- Presentations of research paper summaries

E-Reserve (ER)/E-Journal (EJ)/Internet (I) Reading List

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

Ball, Nicole. 2001. "The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn Societies." In *Turbulent Peace: The Challenge of Managing International Conflict*. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 719-736. (ER)

Barnes, Catherine. 2005. "Weaving the Web: Civil Society Roles in Working with Conflict and Building Peace." In *People Building Peace II: Successful Stories of Civil Society*. Edited by Paul Van Tongeren, et al. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 7-24. (ER)

Barsky, Allan. 2009. "A Capacity-Building Approach to Conflict Resolution." In *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution*. Dennis Sandole et al. eds. London and New York: Rutledge, 215-225. (ER)

Belloni, Roberto. 2008. "Civil Society in War-to-Democracy Transitions." In *From War to Democracy: Dilemmas of Peacebuilding*. Anna Jarstad and Timothy Sisk, eds. Cambridge University Press, 182-210. (ER)

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

Cochrane, Feargal. 2008. "Third-Party Intervention." In *Ending Wars*. Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 39-69. (ER)

Collier, Paul. 2007. "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy." In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 197-216. (ER)

Galtung, Johan. 1969. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6:3, 167-191. (EJ)

Goldstein, Joshua S. 2011. *Winning the War: The Decline of Conflict Worldwide*. New York: Penguin, 1-10. (ER)

Gurr, Ted Robert. 2007. "Minorities, Nationalists, and Islamists: Managing Communal Conflicts in the Twenty-First Century." In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 131-156. (ER)

Hampson, Fen Osler and David Mendeloff. 2007. "Intervention and the Nation-Building Debate." In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 679-700. (ER)

Kelman, Herbert. 2010. "Interactive Problem Solving: Changing Political Culture in the Pursuit of Conflict Resolution." *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 16:4, 389-413. (EJ)

Kriesberg, Louis and Bruce W. Dayton. 2012. *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*. 4th Edition. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1-22. (ER)

Lederach, John Paul. 2001. "Civil Society and Reconciliation." In *Turbulent Peace: The Challenge of Managing International Conflict*." Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 841-854. (ER)

Van Gelder, Tim. 2005. "Teaching Critical Thinking: Some Lessons from Cognitive Science." *College Teaching* 53:1, 41-46. (EJ)

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

Zartman, I. William and Saddia Touval. 2007. "International Mediation." In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 437-454. (ER)

Films

Maletta, Robert (1999). *Gulu: The Struggle for Peace*. London: Trojan Horse.
<http://vimeo.com/9697961>

Responding to Conflict, The Wajir Story (2010). <http://vimeo.com/9935744>

The War We Are Living (2011). PBS. <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/women-war-and-peace/full-episodes/the-war-we-are-living/>

Grading Scale (3 credit hour course)

Average	Grade / Quality Points	Average	Grade / Quality Points
98-100	A+ / 12.99	74-82	B- / 8.01
93-97	A / 12.0	63-73	C / 6.0
90-92	A- / 11.01	52-62	C- / 5.01
87-89	B+ / 9.99	41-51	D / 3.0
83-86	B / 9.0	0-40	F / 0

Honor Code

You are expected to abide by George Mason University's Honor Code while preparing all work for this class.

"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."

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 or any doubt about what you should do, please ask me.

Student Services

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 to 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 and 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 best possible accommodations you might need; and 2) contract 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 coordinates services for students with disabilities, determine reasonable services and accommodations on the basis of the 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>)