

**CONF 101**  
**Conflict and Our World: Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution**  
**FALL 2014**

Lecture: Tuesdays 10:30-11:45 in Robinson B201  
Recitation: Thursdays 10:30-11:45  
Instructor: Dr. Leslie Dwyer Email: ldwyer2@gmu.edu  
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12-1 p.m., Johnson Center

Across all human societies, conflict is part of daily life. Sometimes it may be an annoyance, such as arguing with a sibling over the last cookie; sometimes it is more serious, such as the debate over gun control or immigration; and sometimes it is tragic, as in recent events in Iraq, Ukraine and Missouri. 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. in the 1950s and 1960s. Our increased interconnection in a globalizing world has heightened the need for more attention to determining how humanity 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 social, 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 the most pressing contemporary conflicts.

Attendance in both the lecture and recitation classes is not only mandatory but also 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. You should plan to complete the assigned readings prior to each class. Be sure to look up words that are unfamiliar to you, but realize that some terms have specialized meanings in the field of conflict resolution. Ask in class if you have not understood a term or idea.

Over the course of the semester, students will participate in a number of Experiential Learning Activities, both in lecture sessions and in discussion section. The first ELA, on perceptions of conflict, will take place on September 16. The second ELA, on the conflict in Liberia, will take place over 4 meetings, on November 6, November 11, November 13 and November 18. These ELAs are essential for the course and you will have graded assignments based on each.

Classroom etiquette: Come to class on time and prepared. Turn off your cell phones. Do not disturb others by talking, passing notes, playing games, etc. Do not check email or surf the web. Laptops and tablets are permitted for taking notes only. Use of devices for other purposes may result in significant deductions in your participation grade.

Be mindful of the sensitivities of others in your comments in class; however, open discussion and dialogue are our goal.

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

**ASSIGNMENTS, GRADING, DUE DATES:**

- 1) Attendance and Participation: 10%

Attendance at all lectures and recitation sessions is essential to success in the course. Recitation leaders will take attendance, and expect you to come to class having done all assigned readings and being prepared to discuss them.

- 2) Reflection Papers on Experiential Learning Activities: 10% each

Due on November 13 and December 2

Instructions for these papers will be passed out in recitation sections 1 week prior to the due date.

- 3) 2 Short Papers (3 pages): 10% each

Due on September 18 and October 30 in class

Instructions for these papers will be passed out in recitation sections 1 week prior to the due date.

- 4) In-Class Midterm Exam: 20%

Held in recitation section, October 9

- 5) Final Exam: 30%

Held in our regular classroom, Tuesday, December 16, 10:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Make-up exams and extensions of time for assignments will be arranged ONLY for documented personal illness or family emergency. Students with documented disabilities should make arrangements early in the term by contacting Professor Dwyer.

**University Policies and Support Services:**

Honor Code: GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity ([oai.gmu.edu](http://oai.gmu.edu)) for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is

the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing idea, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

### 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:

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; (<http://ods.gmu.edu>) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

### Library Services:

The School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution library liaison is Mary Oberlies ([moberlie@gmu.edu](mailto:moberlie@gmu.edu)). Do not hesitate to contact her with specific questions about holdings and research in these areas or whom to contact for materials in Fenwick Library.

### **Required Readings:**

There is one required book for the class, which been ordered by the University Bookstore.

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

All other readings are available in electronic format through the CONF 101 course page in your Blackboard account. Recitation leaders will walk students through the process of accessing these electronic reserves on the first day of recitation.

## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

### **WEEK ONE: Introduction to the course**

**Tuesday, August 26: Lecture / Thursday, August 28: Recitation**

Introduction to the Course

### **WEEK TWO: What is conflict?**

**Tuesday, September 2: Lecture / Thursday, September 4: Recitation**

Reading: Nordstrom, “Deadly Myths of Aggression”

Mead, “Warfare is Only an Invention – Not a Biological Necessity”

Grossman, “On Killing”

### **WEEK THREE: Thinking about conflict**

**Tuesday, September 9: Lecture / Thursday, September 11 Recitation**

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, pp. 3-36

### **WEEK FOUR: Nature and sources of conflict I**

**Tuesday, September 16: Lecture / Thursday, September 18: Recitation**

**Experiential Learning Activity #1: “Mediated Perceptions” on September 16**

**First Short Paper Due in Recitation, Thursday, September 18**

Readings: Burton, “Needs Theory”

### **WEEK FIVE: Nature and Sources of Conflict II**

**Tuesday, September 23: Lecture / Thursday, September 25: Recitation**

Readings: Collier, “Economic Causes of Civil Conflict...”

Galtung, “Violence, Peace and Peace Research”

### **WEEK SIX: Nature and Source of Conflict III**

**Tuesday, September 30: Lecture / Thursday, October 2: Recitation**

Readings: Volkan, “Ethnic Tents” and “Chosen Trauma”

**WEEK SEVEN: Approaches to Analyzing Conflict**

**Tuesday, October 7: Lecture / Thursday, October 9: Recitation**

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, pp. 37-188

Kriesberg, "Contemporary Conflict Resolution"

**Midterm Exam: October 9 during Recitation Section**

**WEEK EIGHT: Third Party Roles**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14: NO CLASS, COLUMBUS DAY**

**Thursday, October 16: Recitation**

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, 226-258

**WEEK NINE: Mediation and Interactive Problem Solving**

**Tuesday, October 21: Lecture / Thursday, October 23: Recitation**

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, 189-225

Zartman and Touval, "International Mediation"

**WEEK TEN: Gender, Conflict and Peacebuilding**

**Tuesday, October 28: Lecture / Thursday, October 30: Recitation**

In-class film: "Pray the Devil Back to Hell"

Readings: Cheldelin and Eliatamby, "Women Waging War and Peace"

USIP, "The Other Side of Gender."

**Second Short Paper Due in Recitation, Thursday, October 30**

**WEEK ELEVEN: Peacebuilding I: Civil Society**

**Tuesday, November 4: Lecture / Thursday, November 6: Recitation**

Experiential Learning Activity 1A (Thurs) – Liberia Case Study

Readings: Barnes, "Weaving the Web"

Belloni, "Civil Society in War-to-Democracy Transitions"

## **WEEK TWELVE: Peacebuilding II**

**Tuesday, November 11: Lecture / Thursday, November 13: Recitation**

Experiential Learning Activities IB (Tues) and IIA (Thurs) – Liberia Case Study

**Thursday November 13: Experiential Learning Activity I Response Paper Due**

Readings: Lederach, “Reconciliation: The Building of Relationship”

Barsalou, “Trauma and Transitional Justice in Divided Societies”

## **WEEK THIRTEEN: Peacebuilding III**

**Tuesday, November 18: Lecture / Thursday, November 20: Recitation**

Experiential Learning Activity IIB (Tues) – Liberia Case Study

Readings: Hampson and Mendeloff, “Intervention and the Nation-Building Debate”

## **WEEK FOURTEEN: Peacebuilding IV**

**Tuesday, November 25: Lecture**

**Thursday, November 27: NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING**

Readings: Ackerman and Duvall, “The American South: Campaign for Civil Rights”

Sharp, “Waging Nonviolent Struggle”

Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” Available at:  
[http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles\\_Gen/Letter\\_Birmingham.html](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html)

## **WEEK FIFTEEN: Integration: What have we learned? Where do we go from here?**

**Tuesday, December 2: Experiential Learning Activity II Response Paper Due**

**Tuesday, December 2: Lecture / Thursday, December 4: Recitation**

**FINAL EXAM: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 10:30 A.M. – 1:15 P.M.**

**This will be an in-class exam held in our regular classroom.**

## E-Reserve/E-Journal Reading List

The following readings are available on e-reserves:

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

Barnes, Catherine. "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, 2005.

Barsalou, Judy. April 2005. "Trauma and Transitional Justice in Divided Societies," United States Institute of Peace Special Report 135, <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr135.pdf>

Belloni, Roberto. "Civil Society in War-to-Democracy Transitions." In *From War to Democracy: Dilemmas of Peacebuilding*. Cambridge University Press, 2008, 182-210.

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

Cheldelin, Sandra and Maneshka Eliatamby, 2011. *Women Waging War and Peace: International Perspectives of Women's Roles in Conflict and Post-Conflict Reconstruction*. New York: Continuum.

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, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 197- 216.

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

Grossman, Dave 2009. *On Killing: The Psychological Costs of Learning to Kill in War and Society*. Boston: Back Bay Books. Pp. 5-29

Hampson, Fen Osler, and David Mendeloff. "Intervention and the Nation-Building Debate." In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Kriesberg, Louis. 2001. "Contemporary Conflict Resolution," In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 455-476.

Lederach, John Paul. 1997. "Reconciliation: the Building of Relationship." In *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 23-35.

Mead, Margaret 1990 [1940]. "Warfare is Only an Invention – Not a Biological Necessity." In *The Dolphin Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Douglas Hunt, ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 415-421.

Nordstrom, Carolyn 1998. "Deadly Myths of Aggression." *Aggressive Behavior* 24(2):147-159.

Sharp, Gene 2005. *Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Practice and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Potential*. Manchester, NH: Extended Horizons, Chapter 1: "Facing Acute Conflict." Pp. 13-24.

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

Zartman, I. William, and Touval, Saadia. 2007. "International Mediation." In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Olser Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 437-454.