

## INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

CONF 501

Fall 2014

Thursdays, 4:30-7:10pm

Founders Hall, room 210

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Office Hours: Thursdays, 2:30pm-3:30pm or by appointment

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Welcome to the course and to the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR). This class is an introduction to the field of conflict analysis and resolution. Because this is the first course that many coming to S-CAR will take, it is deliberately broad. Other courses at S-CAR develop one or another of the themes in this introduction in greater depth.

This course examines definitions of conflict, diverse views of its resolution and explores thinking about human behavior and social systems as they relate to the origins of conflict and the role of conflict in violent and peaceful social change. It is designed to introduce you to academic thinking about conflict and its resolution and to help you think systematically and analytically about conflict.

This course will be run as a seminar with an emphasis on discussion and student participation. We value critical thinking and therefore, it is imperative that students read the assigned books and articles prior to the class. Active participation in class discussions will be expected.

The agenda of this course is to build the foundation for your work with the rest of us in the S-CAR community and with those in the field of conflict analysis and resolution.

### REQUIREMENTS

**Participation: 15%**

**Group Presentation: 25%**

**Short Papers: 30%**

**Final Exam: 30%**

#### *Participation*

The emphasis in this class will be on an intellectual give and take between all of us. This means that our meetings will be in the form of a seminar rather than a lecture. This of course places much responsibility on your shoulders and requires you to be responsible for doing all the readings prior to class and actively participating in

class discussions. The success of the course thus depends on you coming to the seminar prepared. Discussion participation will be worth 15% of your final grade. Participation grades will be based on frequency and quality of your involvement each week. You do not need to have something to say on every topic that comes up in discussion but rather should participate in a way that promotes and deepens the discussion. In evaluating participation, I will look for evidence that you have done the readings with sufficient attention and care and have thought about them. Participation grade will also reflect your engagement in various exercises we will be doing during the course.

### ***Group Presentation***

The class will be divided into four groups. Each group will be assigned a particular conflict for analysis. You will have time during the course to meet with your group to prepare the case analysis and presentation. Each presentation will be 30 minutes long. All groups will present their analyses on **November 20<sup>th</sup>**. Time will be provided during a couple class meetings for the teams to prepare their presentations. The four groups will be: Ferguson; Children from Central America Crossing US Borders; Clashes in Rio de Janeiro Favelas and the World Cup; Missing Girls and Boko Haram. We will discuss the group presentations in detail during our first two meetings.

### ***Short Papers***

You will be required to write 3 four to five page papers (double-spaced, 12 point font). Each paper will critically examine the material covered over the previous weeks (readings, exercises, films, class discussions). You will not need to do any additional reading or conduct any additional research in order to write these papers. I will distribute the questions for each paper in class. You will have a week to write each short paper.

### ***Final Exam***

There will also be a take-home final exam. It will consist of three questions based on the readings and class discussions. The final exam will be 10 pages in length. The questions will be handed out during our final class meetings. The exam will be due on **December 11<sup>th</sup>** by **5pm** and should be submitted electronically. The final exam will be worth 30% of your final grade. Late exams will not be accepted.

### ***Writing Guidelines:***

Your written assignments for this class will be graded according to the criteria stated below. The relative weight given to each of these categories will vary depending on the nature of the assignment.

1. Clear and sound content, including a well-stated thesis, related points to support that thesis, and applicable, logically presented, and specific evidence; clarity of argument.
2. Depth of engagement with ideas; originality; seriousness of thought; conceptual complexity.

3. Well-organized structure; text ‘flows’ with coherent and effective transitions between and among ideas; appropriate voice, tone, and style for audience and purpose (e.g. no slang or contractions); accurate word choice.
4. Sufficient and consistent citations.
5. Correct mechanics including grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation.

All papers should be thoroughly proofread before being handed in and will be marked down for excessive typographical errors. Quality of writing is critical because if the writing is poor, then you are unlikely to be able to clearly communicate an argument.

Late assignments or “incomplete” grades will be given only in exceptional cases of personal or immediate family crisis. You **MUST** discuss the possibility of such an arrangement beforehand rather than waiting until an assignment is due. Failure to complete an assignment on time without prior discussion with me, will result in a failing grade for that assignment. If you must miss a class, please let me know beforehand by e-mail.

#### **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](http://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.

#### **English Language Institute:**

The English Language Institute offers free English language tutoring to non-native English speaking students who are referred by members of the GMU faculty or staff. For more information contact 703-993-3642 or [malle2@gmu.edu](mailto:malle2@gmu.edu)

**The Writing Center:**

The Writing Center is a free writing resource that offers individual, group, and online tutoring. For general questions and comments please contact 703-993-4491 or [wcenter@gmu.edu](mailto:wcenter@gmu.edu).

**READINGS**

The books assigned for this class are available for purchase at the GMU Arlington Bookstore. You can also find many of them at the Burton Library, the GMU library or at other libraries that are part of the university consortium. Other readings are available on our Blackboard site.

The following books are available for purchase:

Lisa Schirch, *Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning: Toward a Participatory Approach to Human Security*. Kumarian Press, 2012

Louis Krisberg and Bruce W. Dayton, *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; 4th Edition edition, 2011

**MEETING SCHEDULE****Week One, August 28: Introduction: What is Conflict****Week Two, September 4: Sources of Conflict**

Krisberg and Dayton, *Constructive Conflicts*, chapters 1- 3

Burton, John. "Institutional Values and Human Needs," in *Deviance Terrorism & War*. Australian National University Press (1979): 55-84. (on Blackboard)

Galtung, Johan. "Cultural Violence," in Manfred B. Steger and Nancy S. Lind, editors. *Violence and its Alternatives: an Interdisciplinary Reader*. New York: St. Martin's Press, (1999): 39-53. (on Blackboard)

Time reserved for work on group presentations

**Week Three, September 11: Dynamics of Conflict****Guest Lecturer: Dr. Susan Hirsch**

Krisberg and Dayton, *Constructive Conflicts*, chapters, 4-7

Susan Hirsch and Frank Dukes, *Mountaintop mining* (will be made available)

#### **Week Four, September 18: Collective Action and Mobilization:**

Aldon Morris, "Black Southern Student Sit-in Movement: An Analysis of Internal Organization," *American Sociological Review*, vol. 46, no. 6, December 1981 (on Blackboard)

Timor Kuran, "Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989," *World Politics*, vol. 44, 1991, 7-48 (on Blackboard)

Steven Heydemann & Reinoud Leender "Authoritarian Learning and Authoritarian Resilience: Regime Responses to the 'Arab Awakening,'" *Globalizations*, vol. 8, no. 5, 2011, 647-653 (on Blackboard)

Mark R. Beissinger, "Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomenon: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions," *Perspective on Politics*, vol. 5, no. 2, July 2007, 259-276 (on Blackboard)

Clifford Bob, "Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgent Groups, International Media, and NGO Support," *International Politics*, vol. 38, September 2001, 311-334 (on Blackboard)

#### **Week Five, September 25: Cesar Chavez movie**

Paul Wehr, "Conflict Mapping," available at:  
<http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/treatment/cmap.htm>

Time reserved for work on group presentations

#### **Week Six, October 2: Conflict Mapping Exercise**

##### **First Short Paper Due**

#### **Week Seven, October 9: Conflict Assessment and Conflict and Systems Mapping**

Lisa Schirch, *Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning: Toward a Participatory Approach to Human Security*, chapters 1-10

Robert Ricigliano and Diana Chigas, *Systems Thinking in Conflict Assessment: Concepts and Applications*, November 2011 (on Blackboard and at [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/pnady737.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnady737.pdf) )

## **Week Eight, October 16: Violent Conflict**

Frances Stewart, "Root Causes of Violent Conflict in Developing Countries," *British Medical Journal*, vol. 324, no. 9, February 2002, 342-345 (on Blackboard)

Paul Collier, *Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy* (on Blackboard)

Mary Caprioli, "Primed for Violence: The Role of Gender Inequality in Predicting Internal Conflict," *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 49, no. 2, 2005, 161-178. (on Blackboard)

Gundrun Østby, "Polarization, Horizontal Inequalities and Violent Civil Conflict," *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 45, no. 2, 2008 143-162 (on Blackboard)

Patricia Justino, "On the Links Between Violent Conflict and Household Poverty: How Much Do We Really Know? Micro Level Analysis of Violent Conflict, *MICROCON, Research Working Paper 1*, September 2007 (on Blackboard)

## **Second Short Paper Due**

## **Week Ten, October 23: Intervention**

Krisberg and Dayton, *Constructive Conflicts*, chapters 8-10

Time reserved for work on group presentations

## **Week Eleven, October 30: Intervention II**

Eileen Babbitt, Diana Chiagas and Robert Wilkinson, *Theories and Indicators of Change: Concepts and Primers for Conflict Management and Mitigation*, USAID, March 2013, (on Blackboard and at [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/pnaed180.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnaed180.pdf))

OECD, *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations*, (on Blackboard and at <http://www.oecd.org/development/incaf/38368714.pdf>)

## **Week Twelve, November 6: Conflict Intervention Exercise**

## **Week Thirteen, November 13: Peacebuilding**

Institute for Economics and Peace, *Structures of Peace: Identifying What Leads to Peaceful Societies*, 2011 (on Blackboard)

John Paul Lederach, "Reconciliation: The Building of Relationship," in *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, D.C.: USIP, 1997,

23-35 (on Blackboard)

Judy Barsalou, "Trauma and Transitional Justice in Divided Societies." *USIP Special Report*, April 2005, 1-12 (on Blackboard)

Mats Berdal and Dominik Zaum, "Power after Peace," in Mats Berdal and Dominik Zaum, editors, *Political Economy of Statebuilding: Power After Peace*. London: Routledge, 2013, 1-14 (on Blackboard)

Roland Paris "Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism," *International Security* vol. 22, no. 2, Fall 1997, pp. 54-89 (on Blackboard)

Short Documentary: Wajir Story

**Third Reflection Paper Due**

**Week Fourteen, November 20: Group Presentations**

**Week Fifteen, November 27: NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING**

**Week Sixteen, December 4: Summing Up**

Mary B. Anderson, "Experiences with Impact Assessment: Can we know what Good we do?" 2004, (on Blackboard and at [http://www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/anderson\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/anderson_handbook.pdf))

Lisa Schirch, *Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning: Toward a Participatory Approach to Human Security*, chapters 12 and 13

**FINAL EXAM HANDED OUT. DUE DECEMBER 11<sup>th</sup>, 5pm (should be submitted electronically)**