

## **CONF490: Integration**

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Mondays: 1:30 pm – 4:10 pm  
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### **Overview and structure**

Conflict 490 is a capstone course in which students reflect on what they have learned by integrating and synthesizing knowledge from all their coursework in conflict analysis and resolution, as well as related areas of study. The course takes up several topics of current interest in the conflict field, including social identity, violence, war and civilian devastation, immigration, refugees, civil society development, and education. During the course students engage in individual projects that emphasize and encourage the integration of theory with practice.

Conflict 490 is a designated Synthesis Course in the General Education program. Accordingly, the course is interdisciplinary; students will study conflict, conflict resolution, and specific conflicts by drawing on material and ways of knowing from multiple fields including conflict analysis and resolution, an interdisciplinary field itself. Students will also develop skills through engaging in critical thinking about the integration of theory and practice. As a final project, each student will conduct research on a question relating to the conflict field and present their research findings through a poster/presentation and paper. Ideally, the research will address a topic that has real world and/or policy implications. Upon completing this synthesis course, students will be able to:

1. Communicate effectively in both oral and written forms, applying appropriate rhetorical standards (e.g., audience adaptation, language, argument, organization, evidence, etc.)
2. Connect issues in a given field to wider intellectual, community or societal concerns using perspectives from two or more disciplines
3. Apply critical thinking skills to evaluate the quality, credibility and limitations of an argument or a solution using appropriate evidence or resources.

This class is a Research and Scholarship (RS) Intensive Course. RS designation means that students are given the opportunity to actively participate in the process of scholarship and will make a significant contribution to the creation of a disciplinary-appropriate product.

In this course, students will:

- Create an original scholarly or creative project.

- Communicate knowledge from an original scholarly or creative project.
- Engage in scholarly inquiry by:
  1. Articulating a scholarly question;
  2. Engaging in the key elements of the scholarly process;
  3. Situating the concepts, practices, or results of scholarship within a broader context.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students must be responsible for their own work, and students and faculty must take on the responsibility of dealing explicitly with violations. The tenet must be a foundation of our university culture. [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/distance>].

**Honor Code** □ Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode>].

**MasonLive/Email (GMU Email)** □ Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. [See <https://thanatos.gmu.edu/masonlive/login>].

**Patriot Pass** □ Once you sign up for your Patriot Pass, your passwords will be synchronized, and you will use your Patriot Pass username and password to log in to the following systems: Blackboard, University Libraries, MasonLive, myMason, Patriot Web, Virtual Computing Lab, and WEMS. [See <https://thanatos.gmu.edu/passwordchange/index.jsp>].

**University Policies** □ Students must follow the university policies. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>].

**Responsible Use of Computing** □ Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing>].

**University Calendar** □ Details regarding the current Academic Calendar. [See <http://calendar.gmu.edu>].

**Students with Disabilities** □ Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu>].

**Students are expected to follow courteous Internet etiquette.**

### **University Libraries**

University Libraries provides resources for distance students. [See <http://library.gmu.edu/distance> and [http://infoguides.gmu.edu/distance\\_students](http://infoguides.gmu.edu/distance_students)].

### **Writing Center**

The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>]. You can now sign up for an Online Writing Lab (OWL) session just like you sign up for a face-to-face session in the Writing Center, which means YOU set the date and time of the appointment! Learn more about the [Online](#)

[Writing Lab \(OWL\)](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/?page_id=10). There is a service available to students with English as a second language to help with writing that you may find useful. For more information go to [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/?page\\_id=10](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/?page_id=10)

### **Counseling and Psychological Services**

The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu>].

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), also known as the "Buckley Amendment," is a federal law that gives protection to student educational records and provides students with certain rights. [See <http://registrar.gmu.edu/privacy>].

## **Assessment of Students:**

Students participating in the full course will be graded based on the following:

1. Active participation in the class activities is worth 20 % of the final grade.
2. Students are required to create a research project based on conflict or issue of their choice and design an intervention. You can write on a specific theory (e.g., basic human needs, social identity); theoretician (e.g., Galtung) or practitioner (e.g. Kelman); area of ongoing research (e.g., on violence, gender, diasporas and conflict); practice (e.g., mediation, problem solving workshops, dialogue); or on one of a variety of problems/puzzles/issues in our field (e.g., power in theory and practice, an ethics of practice, conflict resolution and “transitional justice”). You could also choose a specific conflict case-study, so long as you discuss the problems, issues, etc., in theory, research or practice, that the case articulates. Ideally, you will choose to write on a topic that has engaged you deeply as part of your SCAR education, and/or that you hope to pursue as a professional in the field.
  - 2A. Students are required to submit (1) research topic and sources and (2) research statement. Both papers should be 1-2 pages in length and each paper is worth 10% of the final grade. The deadline for research topic and sources is February 24 and for Research statement is March 3.
  - 2B. The research project will be presented in the form of poster presentation that is worth 20% of the final grade. The final research paper should be 15 pages in length and is worth 40% of the final grade. The deadline for the draft is April 21 and for the final paper is May 8<sup>th</sup>.

Assignments turned in late will be graded down, unless the student furnishes written documentation of the medical or family emergency which made timely completion of the work impossible. Please note that it is SCAR policy to refuse to grant grades of

Incomplete for reasons other than documented medical or family emergencies.

### Reading

Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)

Bordens Ashmore, Richard D., Jussim, Lee, and Wilder, David (Eds). (2001) *Social identity, intergroup conflict, and conflict reduction*. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press. <http://magik.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=2007878>

### Course schedule

**Week 1: 1/27:** The idea of “Integration” and the course concept.

**Week 2: 2/3:** Conflict as a complex phenomenon

Reading:

1. Sandole, D. 1998. A comprehensive mapping of conflict and conflict resolution: a three pillar approach.  
<http://www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/sandole>
2. Coleman, P.T. 2003. [Characteristics of protracted, intractable conflict: Toward the development of a metaframework-I](#). *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, Vol 9(1), 1-37 (on blackboard).
3. Coleman, P.T. Understanding the Spread of Malignant Conflict: A Dynamical Systems Perspective *Peace and Conflict*, 16: 127–151, 2010 (on blackboard)

**Week 3: 2/10:** Defining research problems in CAR field.

Reading: Craft, Chs. 1-4

Cheldelin et al, *Conflict*, Ch.2 (Blackboard)

**Week 4: 2/17:** Resources for research

Reading: Craft, Chs. 5-6

Guest speaker: Library Liaison

**BE READY to discuss your research problem in class**

**Week 5: 2/24** Developing argumentation

Reading: Craft, Chs. 7-11

**Research problem and resources ARE DUE in class**

**Week 6: 3/3:** Theoretical approach

Reading: Korostelina (Ch.1 from history education and identity) (on Blackboard)

Ashmore: Ch. 7

Wilfred Dolfsma and Rudi Verburg, "Bridging Structure and Agency: Processes of Institutional Change" <http://repub.eur.nl/res/pub/7014/>

**Research statements ARE DUE in class**

**Week 7 3/10: Mid-Semester Recess: No Class**

**Week 8: 3/17:** Researching vulnerable populations: Refugees

Reading:

1. FMR (2003). Forced Migration Review. Researching Internal Displacement: State of the Art. Conference Report, 2003, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway. (**blackboard**).
2. Ninette, Kelley (2007). "International Refugee Protection Challenges and Opportunities," International Journal of Refugee Law 2007 19: 401-439  
<http://www.lexisnexis.com.mutex.gmu.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/?verb=sr&csi=254934>
3. Rajput, S. (2013). Internal Displacement: Simplifying a Complex Social Phenomenon. Beyond Intractability  
<http://www.beyondintractability.org/rajput-internal-displacement>

Guest speaker: Dr. Sudha Rajput

**Week 9 3/24:** Researching civil society

Reading: TBD

Guest speaker: Kim Toogood

**Week 10 3/31:** Case study approach

Reading: Ashmore, chs. 3&6

Rothbart and Korostelina, Chapter on Lebanese War (on blackboard)

**Week 11 4/7:** Respondent- based approach

Reading: Ashmore, chs. 4&5

Exploring stormfront (blackboard)

Narrating transnational subjects (blackboard)

**Week 12 4/14:** Presentations of drafts and discussions

**Week 13 4/17: Undergrad conference – Thursday instead of next Monday class**

**Week 14 4/29:** Approaches to conflict management and resolution

Reading:

1. [Lederach, J.P. 2003. Conflict Transformation.](http://www.beyondintractability.org/bi-essay/transformation)  
<http://www.beyondintractability.org/bi-essay/transformation>
2. Coleman, P.T. 2004. [Paradigmatic Framing of Protracted, Intractable Conflict: Toward the Development of a Meta-framework-II.](#) *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, Vol 10(3), 197-235 (on blackboard).
3. Coleman, P.T. 2006. Conflict, Complexity, and Change: A Meta-Framework for Addressing Protracted, Intractable Conflicts—III. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*,12(4), 325–348 (on blackboard)

**Week 15 5/5:** Integrating the field, integrating life in the field

Reading: Deutsch et al. Ch. 24

<http://mutex.gmu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=26059&site=ehost-live&scope=site234>

Lederach, Moral imagination (blackboard)