

HUMAN RIGHTS AND INEQUALITY CONF 399-004, Fall 2010

Class meeting time: Thursday, 4:30-7:10 pm. August 30 to Dec. 21, 2010.

Place: Krug Hall, Room 242

Instructor: Randy Salm

Email: rsalm@gmu.edu

Office Hours: Thursday 7:15 – 8:00 pm or by appointment. Robinson Hall B, Rm 365

Course Description

Welcome to Human Rights and Inequality! In this course we will examine the nexus between conflict, human rights and inequality. This course builds on your previous coursework and knowledge on conflict and conflict resolution, while constructing a basic knowledge base on human rights and inequality.

This course will start by examining different cultural and historical views on human rights to position our examination of the issue. We will then look at how legal, social, political and economic factors impact human rights. Next we examine several case studies, such as gender, indigenous rights, and child soldiers, to examine how human rights play out in practice. We will also look at the limits of human rights perspectives, evidenced by the widespread violations, abuses and inequality that exist today within global systems. The relationship between conflict resolution and human rights protection will be explored. In general this course is focused on human rights within the context of international conflict, such as civil wars and violent ethnic conflicts, focusing on such egregious violations as territorial or ethnic cleansing, massacres, disappearances, torture, rape, slavery and conscription.

During this course we will examine in detail such issues as definitions of human rights and inequality, natural or universal rights, civil rights, international human rights law, international humanitarian law, the historical development of human rights, and the role and power of governments in supporting equality or inequality, among other issues.

Course Materials

Required text (available in the GMU bookstore or online):

- Freeman, Michael. 2002. *Human Rights: An Interdisciplinary Approach*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Singer, P.W. 2006. *Children at War*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Additional articles will be made available on GMU Blackboard.

Classroom Etiquette

Please come to class on time and prepared. Bring your readings with you. Turn off cell phones and other electronic devices. Remain in class unless you have an emergency. The use of laptops in class is discouraged except for taking notes. While I encourage open discussion and dialogue, I also encourage you to consider the sensitivities of others in your comments in class. We will be discussing contentious political issues in this course.

Students are encouraged to express diverse perspectives. You are expected to keep a balance between arguing your own position, as well as respecting other opinions.

If an emergency prevents a student from attending class, the student should let me know ahead of time when possible, via email. Please contact a classmate to find out what was missed. Students are responsible for all announcements, assignments, and date changes made in class, and for all material covered in class, even if class is missed. The best way to contact me is by e-mail. I usually respond within 48 hours. I will send any course announcements to your GMU email address, so check periodically.

Assignments and Evaluation

There will be no mid-term or final exam in this class. Instead, short quizzes will test your knowledge of the course material, several individual analysis exercises will test your conflict/human rights analysis skills, and a group project will be used to test your ability to collaboratively examine a conflict/human rights issue.

Participation (10% of your final grade): Classes are interactive. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss readings and share thoughtful reflection.

Quizzes (30% of your final grade)

We will have two quizzes that cover our readings this semester, each worth 15% of your final grade. These are to assess your understanding of the course material and ensure that class discussion involves you and your classmates.

Individual Human Rights Analysis Exercises (30% of your final grade)

You will conduct two individual human rights analysis exercises of specific international or civil conflicts. Each analysis will draw upon the material that we discuss during the semester. Each exercise will be worth 15% of your final grade.

Group Conflict/Human Rights Analysis Exercise (30% of your final grade)

Groups will be formed of 2 to 3 persons. Your group will research and explore examine a conflict/human rights issue addressed during the course, leading to an 8 to 12 page research paper. You will then do a 15 minute presentation in class. The group must confirm with me which topic they will study. The final product should represent a single, conceptually-linked piece of work. With rare exception, each student working in a group is given the same grade for an assignment. If a group is having trouble with a member not fulfilling their work obligation, bring that to my attention immediately. Paper format should be ASA or MLA.

Grading Scale

98 - 100	A+	75 - 78	C+
93 - 97	A	72- 74	C
90 - 92	A-	69- 71	C-
87 - 89	B +	61 - 68	D
83 - 86	B	0 – 60	F
79 - 82	B -		

Academic Policies and Information

Academic Honesty and Collaboration: GMU has an Honor Code with guidelines regarding academic integrity. It is designed, “to promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community” (www.gmu.edu/catalog/policies). 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. Copies of common style manuals are available at the GMU library reference desk or online.

For individual class assignments, you may discuss your ideas with others or ask for feedback; however, you are responsible for making certain that there is no question that the work you hand in is your own. You may not submit papers or presentations from other courses to fulfill assignments for this class.

Late Work: Class assignments submitted late may be penalized at the discretion of the professor. Late papers and proposals will be accepted only in cases of documented personal illness or family emergency. If this is the case, you must leave the paper in my mailbox in the Conflict Analysis and Resolution (CAR) office (Robinson B365) and email a copy at my GMU email address. Papers should be submitted in an envelope marked with my name and the course number. If the office is closed, the envelope can be dropped through the mail slot in the door.

Paper Format: Papers for the course should be typed, double-spaced, have 1” margins, and use a common 12-point font. The pages should be numbered and stapled together. Papers should have a title, include your name and the instructor’s name. Sources should be cited using a single standard academic citation format.

Student Resources

GMU Writing Center

The Writing Center is available if you need assistance with writing your papers. (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>).

Disability Support Services

Any student with learning disabilities or other conditions that may affect academic performance should: 1) contact the Office of Disability Support Services (993-2474) to determine the possible accommodations you might need; and 2) have the Office of Disability Support contact me – the instructor - to discuss reasonable accommodations. The Disability Resource Center Office coordinates services for students with disabilities.

Library Services

The Conflict Analysis and Resolution library liaison is Melissa Johnson (703-993-2212). Don’t hesitate to contact her with specific questions about holdings and research regarding the CAR field.

Schedule: All classes meet on Thursdays, from 4:30–7:20 pm.

Week 1: Sept. 2

Introductions, course protocol, overview, and expectations. Assessment of student knowledge of conflict and human rights.

Readings: None.

Week 2: Sept. 9

General conflict analysis models. Interdisciplinary analysis of conflict. The nature, causes and symptoms of conflict.

Readings: Ramsbotham et al. Ch. 1: Introduction to Conflict Resolution. Ch. 3: Statistics of Deadly Quarrels. Chua, Introduction: Globalization and Ethnic Hatred

Week 3: Sept. 16

Scale and scope of global conflict. Intra- and international conflict. State and civil conflict versus conflict due to globalization.

Readings: Ramsbotham et al. Ch. 4: Understanding Contemporary Conflict. Chua, Ch. 7: Backlash Against Market Dominant Minorities

Quiz #1 due.

Week 4: Sept. 23

Political models for analysis of global conflict. Power, decision making, equality, ideology, change, human rights.

Readings: Chua, Ch. 5: Backlash Against Markets; Ch. 6. Backlash against Democracy. Wrong, Ch. 2 and 3. "The Forms of Power." (*available through e-journal*).

Week 5: Sept.. 30

Economic models for analysis of global conflict. Resources, resource distribution, occupations, labor, equity, production, consumption, capital.

Readings: Held and Kaya, Introduction and Ch. 1. Globalization and Inequality (*available through e-journal*)

Quiz #2 due.

Week 6: Oct. 7

Political and economic models continued.

Readings: Chua, Ch. 1: Rubies and Rice Paddies; Ch. 2. Llama Fetuses, Latifundia... *Individual conflict analysis exercise #1 due.*

Week 7: Oct. 14

Social models for analysis of global conflict. Class, race, mobility, equality, group dynamics, gender, social cycles, world systems.

Readings: Chua, Ch. 4: The Ibo of Cameroon. Coser, Ch. 2. Conflict and Group Boundaries; and Ch. 3. Hostility and Tensions in Conflict Relationships."

Week 8: Oct. 21

Cultural models for analysis of global conflict. Traditions, norms, meaning of things.

Readings: Ramsbotham et al. Ch. 15: Culture, Religion, and Conflict Resolution.
Chua, Ch. 9 The Underside of Western...;

Week 9: Oct. 28

Case study application and discussion of political, economic, social and cultural models of global conflict.

Readings: Ramsbotham et al. Ch.5: Preventing Violent Conflict.
Chua, Ch. 11. Why they Hate Us.

Week 10: Nov. 4

Terrorism and the Global War on Terror.

Readings: Ramsbotham et al. Ch.11: Terror and Global Justice.
Individual conflict analysis exercise #2 due.

Week 11: Nov. 11

Moving from Conflict Analysis to Resolution – Ethics of Intervention and Discourse

Readings: Ramsbotham et al. Ch. 13 and 14, Ethics of Intervention and Dialogue and Discourse

Quiz #3 due.

Week 12: Nov. 18 (No class on Nov. 25 due to Thanksgiving holiday)

Managing Conflict - Peacekeeping and Peacemaking

Readings: Ramsbotham et al. Ch. 6 and 7, Peacekeeping and Peacemaking

Week 13: Dec. 2

Deeper Conflict Resolution – Peacebuilding and Reconciliation

Readings: Ramsbotham et al. Ch. 9 and 10, Peacekeeping and Peacemaking

Week 14: Dec. 9 (last class)

Deeper Conflict Resolution – internationalizing conflict resolution

Readings: Ramsbotham et al. Ch. 16, Towards Cosmopolitan Conflict Resolution
Wrap up of class.