

GLOBAL CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION
CONF 340 Section 001, Summer 2012

Class meeting time: Monday-Thursday 10:00am– 12:15 p.m.

Innovation Hall 209

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Office Hours: Thursday 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. or by appointment.

Office location: Robinson Hall B, Room 365

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to the course! Conflict analysis and resolution, is a multi-disciplinary field, which has grown fairly rapidly since the 1980's. The field offers a wide range of analytical tools and problem-solving mechanisms at various levels including the individual, social, international and global. The purpose of this class is to study the causes and consequences of global conflict and what steps can be taken towards the resolution of such conflicts. Conflict resolution first requires conflict analysis; we must understand the why, when, and how of a particular global conflict system before we can hope to resolve it.

The end of the Cold War has ushered in an era of globalization. This is the emergence of a new environment that has transformed the nature of international economic, political, social and cultural relations. Of particular interest to the course are various types of interstate and intra-state conflicts that are manifestations of the trends in globalization. Changing dynamics in the global security structure include: the vertical and horizontal increases in proliferation of small arms, conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction; the acquisition and dissemination of nuclear technology; the lucrative export of arms; and the ensuing regional and international arms races. These phenomena pose many challenges for the global security environment and are qualitatively different than security concerns during the Cold War era.

The course shall explore conflict theory, identifying the underlying causes and emergence of deep-rooted protracted conflicts. Conflict processes and various types, symptoms and patterns of conflict dynamics and conflict escalation shall be examined. In an effort to understand the dynamic and complex nature of modern conflict systems, we will attend carefully to the inter-connectedness of the causes, conduct, and effects of violent conflict around the world. In addition, various models for intervention including prevention, management, settlement, resolution and transformation shall be discussed. We shall apply various theoretical insights to conflict hotspots around the world. Class discussions and assignments shall reflect upon the extent to which these theories help us understand conflict, as well as interventions in conflict systems. Student participation in discussions and prior preparation (as specified below), shall be critical in making the class a successful learning experience.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Familiarize students with conflict theories, terminology and concepts associated with global conflicts;
- Help students think critically, systematically and analytically about intrastate and interstate conflicts in different regions and in a variety of contexts
- Increase understanding of various approaches to analyze/resolve global conflicts in different contexts
- Analyze root causes of intrastate and interstate conflicts, focusing at multiple-levels of analysis – individual, state/society, regional and global
- Examine particular international and intrastate conflicts, mapping out their developments and examining past and present resolution efforts

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Please come to class on time and prepared. 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. Do not engage in side conversations and passing notes. Be mindful of the sensitivities of others in your comments in class; however, open discussion and dialogue are our goals. We will be discussing contentious political issues in this course. Students are encouraged to express diverse perspectives. You are likely to encounter strong opinions. You will be expected to keep a balance between arguing your own position on these issues, as well as encouraging, hearing, and respecting other opinions.

If an emergency prevents a student from attending class, the student should let me know ahead of time when possible. 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 they are not there.

You may contact me by phone or by e-mail at any time. E-mailing is the best way to reach me. I shall respond to your query within 48 hours. Please, remember to always use your GMU email account when communicating with me.

ASSIGNMENTS and EVALUATION

Participation: Classes shall follow an interactive seminar format. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss readings. Regular attendance and active participation based on thoughtful reflection of the literature and class discussions are not only highly recommended but also required. This will be worth **15% of your final grade**.

Experiential Learning Activity (ELA): in the frames of the course we will conduct an Experiential Learning Activity on the gas dispute in Eastern Mediterranean. In this role-play activity, you will simulate a United Nations summit aimed at preventing interstate conflict over vast undersea gas and oil fields recently discovered in the Eastern

Mediterranean. This simulation uses a contemporary scenario to enhance your understanding of the complex dynamics of conflict and negotiation at interstate, regional and international levels, and the roles of identity and interests as potential drivers of escalation or resolution. Sound preparation and effective participation in this ELA is worth **20% of your final grade**.

In-class Presentation and Discussion Leading: Each student shall prepare a **class presentation** of the readings assigned for the week, as well as **three discussion questions**. Each student will have 20 minutes to provide an overview of the readings and present their basic points, strengths and weaknesses. After the presentation, the discussion leaders will give three questions relevant to the readings and will lead a discussion among their colleagues for another 15-20 minutes. More specifically in your presentation you shall:

- Provide an overview of the readings, emphasizing the main points discussed by the authors.
- Critically reflect on the readings and present their main strengths and weaknesses
- During the presentation students are expected to draw links between the readings and real-world experience, using, if applicable, examples of current global conflicts; In other words, students –among others– should answer the following question: how do theoretical concepts discussed in our readings apply to real world situations as we currently experience them?
- Discussion questions should reflect a good understanding of the readings and be thought-provoking, so as for the audience to be more engaged in the discussion

Discussion leading performance will be evaluated on the following basis:

- How well the presentation captures the basic insights offered in the readings
- Demonstration of ability to critically evaluate and reflect on the readings
- How well the presenter manages to keep the audience engaged in the discussion

In-class presentations will be worth **15% of your final grade**.

Please note: *All students should know that active participation in presentations made by other students will be considered part of their final participation grade.*

Midterm Exam: This will be an in-class exam and will be worth **20% of the final grade**. It will include a combination of multiple choice questions, brief definition of key concepts we will cover in our class, and essay questions. You will be given 75 minutes to take the exam. The exam shall evaluate your familiarity with various conflict theories and models studied thus far (Monday, June 11th).

Research Paper: You will write a 10-page research paper on a case study. In this paper, drawing from theories we will learn in our class, you will present and discuss the basic parameters of a contemporary conflict and offer suggestions for resolving the conflict. It is an individually written paper, demonstrating your own reflections on the application of theory to a conflict of your choice. Your paper must aim to do the following:

- Analyze a conflict drawing on one or two theories discussed in class. In our class we will explore a number of analytic frameworks that may help you in this task.

- Recommend a number of potential conflict interventions that may help parties in conflict deal effectively with the issues they face.

Further details on the structure of the final paper, as well as on other specifics will be given later in the semester. Your final research paper will be evaluated on the following basis:

a) Demonstration of knowledge of the given conflict system: Throughout the paper you need to show that you have done a sound research and that you understand the different parameters of the conflict you explore (background, parties, causes, issues, relationships, dynamics etc).

b) Right use of theories and concepts we have learned in class: Your writing needs to reflect a clear understanding of the theories you have chosen to use in your case. In your paper you also need to explain why the theories you use are relevant to the case you explore.

c) Recommendations: Again here the intention is to demonstrate that you have understood the different types of intervention and when each of those types is used (matching the reality on the ground to the right type of intervention). Here, being realistic and exploring ethical concerns is important.

d) Overall organization and clarity: The reader needs to be able to follow easily what is being presented in the paper. Thus, your paper needs to be a cohesive narrative rather than an unstructured body of information. You may have done an excellent job in your research, but throwing information out there without a structure and in a disorganized way does not help the reader understand what you write.

e) Correct and consistent citation style: this is an academic paper and this needs to be reflected in the overall format. If you are not sure about which style to use or if you have questions, you can contact the GMU Writing Center (e-mail wcenter@gmu.edu, or call 703-993-4491).

You are welcome to discuss your ideas with me. A one-page proposal of what you plan to research with a tentative bibliography is due in class by Monday, June 4th. I will return your proposal to you by June 11th with my comments. **The final research paper is due on June 29th**, and you are expected to send it to me electronically. Please, pay attention to grammar, spellings, typographical mistakes and consistency in citations, as it shall have an impact on your grade. The final research paper shall be worth **25% of your final grade**.

Critical reflection: Reflection is a major mechanism of learning from experience and an indispensable ingredient of self-development. When carried out critically, reflection enables individuals to deeply comprehend and evaluate new information, thus, developing new meaning perspectives. These transformative dimensions of reflection may be particularly useful to social scientists in general, and conflict analysts in particular, as it allows for deeper understanding of the social world and of complex

conflict realities that we are called to analyze. For this reason, starting from our second meeting, we will be spending the last 5-10 minutes of each class writing individually one or two paragraphs as a reflection of what we learned in each meeting. This will be worth **5% of your final grade.**

Summary:

-- Class Participation:	15%
-- ELA Participation:	20%
-- In-class Discussion Leading:	15%
-- Mid-term Exam:	20% (June 11 th)
-- Final Research Paper:	25% (Due date: June 29 th)
-- Reflection Paragraphs:	5%

Grading Scale

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

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Academic Honesty and Collaboration: *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.

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.* “I wasn’t sure how to cite a source, so I left out the reference,” is not an acceptable defense for plagiarism. Copies of common style manuals are available at the GMU library reference desk or online at <http://library.duke.edu/research/citing/workscited/>. 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 that are submitted late can be penalized by one point for each day they are late (i.e. B instead of B+). Late papers will be accepted only in cases of documented personal illness or family emergency. If this is the case, you must email a copy at my GMU email address per the extension given to you.

Paper Format: Papers for the course should be typed, double-spaced, have 1” margins, and use a common 12-point font. Headers should include only the course number, CONF 340. **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

English Language Institute

The English Language Institute offers free English language tutoring to non-native English speaking students who are referred by a member of the GMU faculty or staff. For more information, visit <http://eli.gmu.edu/>, call 703-993-3642 or e-mail 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 visit <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>, e-mail wcenter@gmu.edu, or call 703-993-4491.

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 possible accommodations you might need; and 2) contact 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. The staff of the Disability Resource Center Office coordinate services for students with disabilities, determine reasonable services and accommodations on the basis of 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>).

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS
(all readings available electronically on Blackboard)

PART I: UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT

Meeting 1: Monday, May 21st

Introduction to the course, discussion on the Syllabus, Course protocol, Overview, Expectations and Requirements; Defining Conflict

Readings:

Hedges, C. (2002). War Is a Force that Gives Us Meaning. New York: Anchor Books. Introduction

Pruitt, D.G., Kim, S.H. (2004). Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate and Settlement. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill. Chapter 1: Overview

Meeting 2: Tuesday, May 22nd

Key Concepts in Conflict Resolution; Contemporary Global Conflict

Readings:

Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse, T., and Miall, H. (2007). Contemporary Conflict Resolution”, 2nd Edition. Cambridge: Polity Press. Chapter 1: Introduction to Conflict Resolution: Concepts and Definitions

Levy, J. (2007), “International sources of interstate and intrastate War”. In Crocker, C.A., Hampson, F.O., and Aall, P. (eds) Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in A Divided World. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press

Meeting 3: Wednesday, May 23rd

Theories of Conflict

Readings:

Burton, John. (1998). “Conflict Resolution: The Human Dimension.” The International Journal of Peace Studies, ISSN 1085 7494, Volume 3. No 1. Available online at: http://www.gmu.edu/academic/ijps/vol3_1/burton.htm

Sandole, Dennis J.D. (1993). "Paradigm, Theories, and Metaphors in Conflict and Conflict Resolution: Coherence or Confusion?". In Sandole, D.J.D, Van Der Merwe, H. (eds.) *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Applications*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press. pp. 3-24.

Ramsbotham, O. (2005). The Analysis of Protracted Social Conflict: A tribute to Edward Azar. *Review of International Studies*, 31 (1), pp. 109-126

Meeting 4: Thursday, May 24th

Identity, Inter-group Dynamics and Conflict; Psychological Dimensions of Conflict

Readings:

Korostelina, K. (2007). *Social identity and Conflict: Structures, Dynamics and Implications*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. Chapter 1: "Social Identity as Social Phenomenon and Scientific Concept"

Ross, M.H. (2007). *Cultural Contestation in Ethnic Conflict*. Cambridge University Press. Introduction: Easy Questions and Hard Answers, What Are They Fighting About?

Monday, May 28th: No class

Meeting 5: Tuesday, May 29th

Analytic frameworks: 3-pillar and SPITCEROW

Readings:

Sandole, Dennis J.D. (1998). "A Comprehensive Mapping of Conflict and Conflict Resolution: A Three Pillar Approach." *Peace and Conflict Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2, December, pp. 1-30. Available online at:
<http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/pcs/sandole>

Chris Mitchell: SPITCEROW: Framework for the Analysis of Conflict Systems

Meeting 6: Wednesday, May 30th

Culture and Conflict

Avruch, K. (2003). "Culture". In Cheldelin, S., Druckman, D., and Fast, L. (eds). *Conflict: From Analysis to Intervention*. London; New York: Continuum

Huntington, Samuel. (1993). "The Clash of Civilizations." *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, Issue 3, pp.22-50.

Sen, Amartya. (2006) "What Clash of Civilizations? Why Religious Identity isn't Destiny." Adapted from *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. Norton: New York. Available online at: <http://www.slate.com/id/2138731/>

Meeting 7: Thursday, May 31st

Terrorism

Readings:

Charles Haus (2003) Terrorism. Retrieved from 'Beyond Intractability':
<http://www.beyondintractability.org/bi-essay/terrorism>

Crenshaw, M. (2007). "Terrorism and Global Security". In Crocker, C.A., Hampson, F.O., and Aall, P. (eds) *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in A Divided World*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press

Meeting 8: Monday, June 4th (Research Paper Proposal Due)

Collective Action –Mobilization Theories

Readings:

Tarrow, S. (1998). "Contentious Politics and Social Movements". In *Power in Movement: Social Movement and Contentious Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press

Rubinstein, R. (2012). "What is Occupy? A Conflict Analysis Perspective" *Unrest Magazine*, Retrieved from: <http://www.unrestmag.com/what-is-occupy-a-conflict-analysis-perspective/>

Sweetman, D. (2012). "Occupy and the Absence of Systemic Conflict Resolution". *Unrest Magazine*, Retrieved from: <http://www.unrestmag.com/occupy-and-the-absence-of-systemic-conflict-resolution/>

Meeting 9: Tuesday, June 5th

Economic Sources of Conflict & Natural Resources Management

Readings:

Malone, D. and Sherman, J. 2007. "Economic Factors in Civil Wars," In Crocker, C.A., Hampson, F.O., and Aall, P. (eds) *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in A Divided World*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press

USIP Guide to Natural Resources, Conflict and Conflict Resolution

PART II: DEALING WITH CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT

Meeting 10: Wednesday, June 6th

Negotiation

Readings:

Fisher R. and Ury, W. (1991). *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In*. Boston : Houghton Mifflin. Introduction & Chapter 1.

Druckman, D. (2003). "Negotiation". In Cheldelin, S., Druckman, D, and Fast, L. (eds.), *Conflict From Analysis to Intervention*, London –New York: Continuum

Meeting 11: Thursday, June 7th

3rd Party Intervention and Conflict Prevention

Readings:

Pruitt, D.G., Kim, S.H. (2004). *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate and Settlement*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill. Chapter 11: The Intervention of Third Parties

Bercovitch, J., /Jackson, R. (2009). *Conflict Resolution in the 21st Century: Principles, Methods and Approaches*. University of Michigan Press. Chapter 7: Preventive Diplomacy

Meeting 12: Monday, June 11th (Mid-term exam)

Peacekeeping and Peacemaking

Readings:

Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse, T., and Miall, H. (2011). *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*", 3rd Edition. Cambridge: Polity Press. Chapter 6: "Containing Violent Conflict: Peacekeeping" and "Peacemaking" pages 171-188

Mats Berdal (2003). Ten Years of International Peacekeeping, *International Peacekeeping*, 10 (4), pp. 5-11

Meeting 13: Tuesday, June 12th

Peacebuilding and Reconciliation

Readings:

Michelle, Maiese, Beyond Intractability: "Peacebuilding", retrieved from: <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/peacebuilding/?nid=5154>

Bercovitch, J., /Jackson, R. (2009). *Conflict Resolution in the 21st Century: Principles, Methods and Approaches*. University of Michigan Press. Chapter 11: Reconciliation and Justice

Paris, R. (2002). International Peacebuilding and the 'Mission Civilisatrice'.
Review of International Studies, 28, pp. 637-656

Meeting 14: Wednesday, June 13th

Ethics in Conflict Resolution

Readings:

Anderson, M.B. (2002). Can My Good Intentions Make Things Worse?: Lessons for Peacebuilding from the Field of International Humanitarian Aid. In Lederach, J.P., and Jenner, J.M. (ed.) A Handbook of International Peacebuilding: Into the Eye of the Storm. San Francisco : Jossey-Bass

Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse, T., and Miall, H. (2007). Contemporary Conflict Resolution", 2nd Edition. Cambridge: Polity Press. Chapter 13: The Ethics of Intervention

PART III: INTEGRATION: EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITY

Meeting 15: Thursday June 14th

Experiential Learning Activity on the gas dispute in Eastern Mediterranean: Pre-test & Preparatory Session

Meeting 16: Monday, June 18th

Experiential Learning Activity on the gas dispute in Eastern Mediterranean: First Round of the UN Summit

Meeting 13: Tuesday, June 19th

Experiential Learning Activity on the gas dispute in Eastern Mediterranean: Second Round of the UN Summit

Meeting 14: Wednesday, June 20th

Post-test & Debrief ELA

Meeting 15: Thursday, June 21st

Outstanding Issues, Course Wrap-up and Evaluation

Final paper due: Friday, June 29th