

CONF 642: Integration of Theory and Practice

Fall 2016

Class Time: Wed, 4:30-7:10 pm

Location: Arlington: Founders Hall 467

Instructor: Ho-Won Jeong, E-mail: hwjeong@gmu.edu, hwjclasses@gmail.com

COURSE OUTLINE

This course is designed to help S-CAR MS Students pull their understanding of conflict analysis and resolution together. In particular, we will focus on how we can develop an integrated approach to theory, research methods, and practice in such a way as to review what has been developed in the field of conflict studies. As this field is multi disciplinary in nature, our discussion will include the contributions of different disciplinary areas to the development of approaches to conflict analysis and resolution. In addition, we will examine how different theories can be applied to particular sets of problems both domestic and international. Therefore, this course will provide an integrative process of student learning with holistic orientations of our understanding of the field.

In the pursuit of a coherent knowledge base, students are expected to weave together their understanding of theories on 1) the causes and conditions of conflict initiation and escalation at all levels 2) exploration of hypothesized approaches and processes for responding to conflicts in different domains 3) analysis of actual approaches and processes for conflict management and resolution and 4) appropriate research tools for applying theory to practice and feeding the results of practice back to theory.

The format of the class consists of lectures, readings, class presentations, exercises, and written assignments. In assisting students in building their ability to develop independent thinking and practice, CONF 642 relies on interactive class dynamics based on weekly contributions, informed by appropriate preparation, and reciprocal feedback. At the end of the semester, we will have opportunities to bring all the lessons together to integrate them into a coherent whole: conflict resolution theory and practice, supported by research methods. In facilitating the application of theory to practice and the feedback from practice to theory, we will develop the methods of evaluation.

REQUIREMENTS

Students will be asked to make class presentations based on the reading assignment, write a mid-term essay, make a presentation on practice along with a written report and complete a final paper. The grade for class participation and presentation is divided as follows: one class presentation based on the reading assignment (5%); two page short essays (10%). For the mid term essay, students will be asked to integrate the first half of the semester's class learning (25%). The students will also be asked to make a presentation on their favorite types of conflict resolution practice or skills either on November 23 or 30 along

with a written report (20%). The final term paper will focus on the integration of conflict analysis and resolution practice in 10 single spaced pages (40% of final grade). Specific due dates of the above assignments will be announced if they are not mentioned in the syllabus. Excessive absence (more than three times) can result in either a failure or lower grade (with the exceptions of family illness or unforeseen accidents). The late submission of assignments will be subject to a reduced grade. Students are required to pay full attention to the university honor code (copied and attached at the end of this syllabus).

Required Reading: Textbooks available at the GMU bookstore

Chris Mitchell, *The Nature of Intractable Conflict*, Palgrave, 2014

Christopher Mitchell and Michael Banks, *Handbook of Conflict Resolution: The Analytical Problem Solving Approach* (New York: Pinter, 1996).

<http://scar.gmu.edu/book/handbook-of-conflict-resolution-analytical-problem-solving-approach>

Howon Jeong, *International Negotiation*, Cambridge University Press, 2016

Howon Jeong (2009) *Conflict Management and Resolution*, London: Routledge

His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler, *The Art of Happiness in a Troubled World*, Penguin and Random House, 2009

Suggested Reading

Students are not responsible for covering suggested readings but advised to refer to them if they want to further enhance their knowledge.

John W. Burton, *Resolving Deep Rooted Conflict: a Handbook* (University Press of America), 1987

John W. Burton, *Conflict Resolution: Its Language and Processes* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996)

John W. Burton, *Violence Explained* (University of Manchester Press, 1997)

John W. Burton and Frank Dukes, *Conflict: Practices in Management, Settlement & Resolution* (New York: St. Martins, 1990)

John W. Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention* (New York: St. Martins, 1990)

John W. Burton ed., *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution* (New York: St. Martins, 1990)

Course Schedule

Week 1 (8/31): Introduction: Course Overview

Week 2 (9/7): The Status of the Field

Please prepare a one page essay that identifies your favorite 1) practice, 2) theory, 3) research methodology (including evaluation). The essay can reflect on your past, present, and future engagement in real world experiences. If there are articles and books recommendable for others, please mention them in your essay as well.

Suggested: John W. Burton, *Conflict Resolution: Its Language and Processes* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996)

John W. Burton, *Violence Explained* (University of Manchester Press, 1997)

Week 3 (9/14): Conflict Analysis: A Conceptual Tool Box
How could different types of conflict be compared?

The Nature of Intractable Conflict, Chapters 1-4

Conflict Management and Resolution, Chapters 1-3, 7

Week 4 (9/21): Conflict Settings: Cooperation and Competition

International Negotiation, Chapters 2-5

Week 5 (9/28): Positive Psychology

The Art of Happiness in a Troubled World

A two page essay (in single space) is due.

Week 6 (10/5): Asymmetric Conflict

Guest Lecturer on Self-Immolation

Week 7 (10/12): Conflict Regulation, Transformation and Termination

The Nature of Intractable Conflict, Chapters 5 through 12

A two page essay (in single space) is due. The essay needs to identify five concepts or theories that you consider important to understanding conflict analysis.

Suggested Reading: *Conflict Management and Resolution*, Chapters 4-6

Christopher R. Mitchell, 'Beyond Resolution: What Does Conflict Transformation Actually Transform?' *Peace and Conflict Studies*, May 2002
<http://www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/CM83PCS.htm>

Peace Building: Concepts and Applications
Jeong, *Peacebuilding in Post-conflict Societies*

Week 8 (10/19): Methods for Resolving Conflict: Negotiation

International Negotiation, Chapters 6-11

Suggested Reading:
Conflict Management and Resolution, Chapters 8

Week 9 (10/26): Mid-term Exam

Week 10 (11/2): Mediation and Facilitation

Conflict Management and Resolution, Chapters 7, 9-11

Week 11 (11/9): Skills: Problem Solving

Christopher Mitchell and Michael Banks, *Handbook of Conflict Resolution: The Analytical Problem Solving Approach* (New York: Pinter, 1996).
<http://scar.gmu.edu/book/handbook-of-conflict-resolution-analytical-problem-solving-approach>

Suggested: John W. Burton, *Resolving Deep Rooted Conflict: a Handbook* (University Press of America), 1987

Week 12 (11/16): Dispute Resolution in a Nonviolent Setting

Roundtable: Conflict Resolution Skills

<http://www.edcc.edu/counseling/documents/Conflict.pdf>

Conflict Transformation, Human Rights and Needs
<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan001363.pdf>

Week 13 (11/23): Thanksgiving

Week 14: Presentation on Practice Models

The development of training manuals or a practice model for conflict intervention

Fifteen minutes presentation by each student

Week 15 (11/30): Presentation on Practice: Advocacy Roles and Ethics

Intervention in asymmetric conflict

<http://ccare.stanford.edu/>

Suggested Reading:

Roy, Beth. (2009) Chapter 2, "Thinking about Power." In *Conflict Transformation and Restorative Justice Manual: Foundations and Skills for Mediation and Facilitations*, 5th edition, Mennonite Central Committee, Office of Justice and Peacebuilding, Akron, PA

Week 16 (12/7): Advanced Research and Practice

Final Paper Due

Integration: The paper assignment: what is your favorite type of practice? What are research methods suitable for your conflict resolution practice? How could your practice make a difference in real world settings? What types of knowledge needs to be more sufficiently developed in the evolution of the field? What areas does the field need to focus more on? The presentation of diagrams, etc. is strongly encouraged.

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. 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.

ICAR 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. ICAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it.