

**CONF 642/900: Integration of Theory, Research and Practice  
On the Border of Palestine and Israel  
George Mason University Spring 2011**

Faculty: Marc Gopin, PhD

Marc Gopin  
[mgopin@gmu.edu](mailto:mgopin@gmu.edu)  
CRDC, 5<sup>th</sup> floor ICAR  
Preferable way of communication: email

**Course time and location:** 1. two preparatory sessions at CRDC  
2. Ten days surrounding Spring Break in Israel and Palestine, 3. Debriefing at CRDC

**Course Description:**

CONF 642/900 is the capstone course in which graduate students in the last period of study reflect on what they have learned, integrating and synthesizing knowledge from all their coursework in conflict analysis and resolution courses, as well as related areas of study. Conflict 642 is a capstone course at ICAR that combines a high-level demonstration of different analytical skills in conflict analysis and resolution with the more practical problems of how students might apply these skills outside the academy. To accomplish this task this section of 642/900 is a highly challenging practical intervention in perhaps the most long-term and intense intractable global conflict. The course will take place literally on the border of Israel and Palestine, with class time and intensive engagements on both sides of the border, engagements with Palestinian and Jewish social change agents, social businesses, and cutting edge peacemakers.

In 2010 CRDC at ICAR pioneered two innovative seminars, one in Syria and one in Jerusalem, which created quite a positive reaction among ICAR students, both Masters and Ph.D. students. The model is a combination of intensive classroom study, a wide variety of speakers from the local region, and extensive field experience engaging communities across the spectrum for a period of about ten days, combined with preparation meetings, follow up meetings and individual help with research.

This experience will be an integration of new theoretical approaches to peacebuilding in a uniquely intractable conflict where CRDC has innovated a direct intervention of social justice practice, study, and engagement. The course has been carefully engineered to support directly agents of change, peacemakers, and socially responsible small businesses. The student is immediately experiencing, participating in and observing a direct intervention in which the course itself is a device to aid the lives and livelihoods of poor change agents, both nonprofit and for profit, Palestinian and Jewish. In addition, the seminar and its experiences are fundamentally a dual narrative approach to understanding the reality on the ground. Every day of the seminar will involve study and field work on

both sides of the border with Palestinians and Israeli Jews. The method of intervention is utterly new in its combination of nonprofit, for profit, social justice and conflict resolution, and begs for the evolution of theory and research from the students.

### **Course Requirements:**

- Effective participation as a practitioner: 30%
- Summary of the readings, 10 pages: 20%
- Final Paper: 50% of the final grade. The purpose of this paper is for the student to engage in an exercise of building theory from practice. 25 pages MS, 40 pages Ph.D.

This analysis will be composed of two parts:

- A. A detailed account of the practices that you saw, participated in or initiated yourself.
- B. Theoretical analysis of those practices as they may or may not relate to the theories of conflict analysis and resolution that you have studied at ICAR.
- B1. A research design for evaluation of a practice or set of practices that you witnessed, including the implementation of social justice goals as a central component of conflict resolution practice.
- C. An operating definition of “effective practice” for the purposes of your analysis. (You will have to determine and justify what constitutes for you ‘effectiveness’ or ‘success’), placing yourself somewhere along the spectrum between ‘success’ as any positive gestures that are well received in a conflict environment, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, no success possible short of a complete revolution of the power dynamics between enemies and a complete achievement of “peace” and “justice”.
- D. A set of recommendations from you about effective practice, in Israel/Palestine but applicable elsewhere, based on your experience, your understanding of theory, and your development of your own theory based on the practice you witnessed or initiated.

**Reading Materials: All books are available for purchase at the Arlington bookstore and on a 4-hour print reserve at the Arlington Library. Book chapters are available on the E-reserves. Directions to access them are below the readings.**

### **Required:**

Abu Nimer, Mohamed and Ned Lazarus. "The Peacebuilders Paradox and the Dynamics of Dialogue: Psychosocial Approaches to Israeli/Palestinian Peacebuilding". In: "Beyond Bullets and Bombs: Grassroots Peacebuilding between Palestinians and Israelis". (J. Kuriansky ed.) (Greenwood Press, 2007). –Available on the E-reserves and on a 4-hour print reserve

Conflict Resolution Training in the Middle East: Lessons To Be Learned. *International Negotiation: A Journal of Theory and Practice*, Special Issue on International Training of Conflict Resolution, 3:99-116, 1998.

Cuhadar-Gurkaynak, E., Dayton B., and Paffenholz, T. "Evaluation in Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding". In Sandole, D.J.D., Byrne S., Sandole-Staroste I., and Senehi J. (eds.) "Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution". London, UK: Routledge –Available on the E-reserves and on a 4-hour print reserve

Gopin, Marc. "Holy war, Holy Peace: How Religion Can Bring Peace to the Middle East". Oxford University Press, 2002. (Arlington Bookstore and 4-hour print reserve)

Gopin, Marc. *To Make the Earth Whole: The Art of Citizen Diplomacy in an Age of Religious Militancy*. Lanham, MD. Rowman & Littlefield, 2009. Available at Amazon.com, Barnesandnoble.com and the publisher. (Arlington Bookstore and 4-hour print reserve)

Haaretz—minimum of two hours reading

IPCRI documents <http://www.ipcri.org>, s.v. The IPCRI database on Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and Peacemaking—minimum two hours of reading

Abu-Nimer, M. "Nonviolent Action in Israel and Palestine: A Growing Force". In: Kaufman, Edy, Walid Salem, and Juliette Verhoeven (eds.) *Bridging the Divide: Peacebuilding in Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. New York: Lynne Rienner, 2006. (Also translated into Italian) –Available on the E-reserves and on a 4-hour print reserve

Nasser, Ilham and Mohammed Abu-Nimer. "Peace Education in a Bilingual and Bi-ethnic School for Palestinians and Jews in Israel: Lessons and Challenges." In Zvi Bekerman, Mc Glynn, C. (eds.) (2007): *Addressing ethnic conflict through peace education: international perspectives*. Macmillan Palgrave. –Available on the E-reserves and on a 4-hour print reserve

Pearson d'Estree, T., Fast L.A., Weiss J.N., and Jakobsen M.S. "In Theory: Changing the Debate about `Success` in Conflict Resolution Efforts". *Negotiation Journal*, Vol. 17, No 2, pp.101-113. April 2001.

Sandole, Dennis J.D. "Critical Systematic Inquiry in Conflict Analysis and Resolution: An Essential Bridge between Theory and Practice". In Sandole, D.J.D., Byrne S., Sandole-Staroste I., and Senehi J. (eds.) "Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution". London, UK: Routledge – Available on the E-reserves and on a 4-hour print reserve

The unusual pairs films, best view at <http://www.zejmedia.com/>

### **Strongly Recommended Readings:**

Collaborative Learning Projects Webpage. "Listening Project". Retrieved from:  
[http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/project\\_profile.php?pid=LISTEN&pname=Listening%20Project](http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/project_profile.php?pid=LISTEN&pname=Listening%20Project)

Dowty, Alan. "Israel/Palestine". Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005. (Arlington Bookstore and 4-hour print reserve)

Druckman, Daniel. "Doing Research: Methods of Inquiry for Conflict Analysis". Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2005. (Arlington Bookstore and 4-hour print reserve)

Lederach, John Paul. "The Moral Imagination: The Art and Sould of Building Peace". New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. (Arlington Bookstore and 4-hour print reserve)

List with NGO's active in Israel-Palestine: <http://www.peacengo.org/organizations.asp>

Rothman, Jay. "Action Evaluation". 2003. Retrieved from Beyond Intractability:  
[http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/action\\_evaluation/](http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/action_evaluation/)

Aria Group. "Collaborative Visioning". Retrieved from:  
[http://www.ariagroup.com/?page\\_id=5](http://www.ariagroup.com/?page_id=5)

### **Accessing E-Reserves:**

1. Go to <http://oscr.gmu.edu>
2. Click on the E-Reserves tab
3. Using the drop-down boxes, select the course [CONF 900] and instructor.
4. Enter in the password (**border**) and click "submit" to view the item. It is case sensitive.
5. To view and print an article click on the small PDF button or the Link button if available

If you experience problems with an electronic reserve item or need additional help please contact the E-Reserves Coordinator at 993.9043. If you need additional assistance please e-mail [ereserves@gmu.edu](mailto:ereserves@gmu.edu).

### **Honor Code and Plagiarism**

A reminder: Plagiarism or other violations of the **honor code** are not acceptable in this or any other GMU class. In addition to the following, please see the ICAR handbook:

[http://www.gmu.edu/departments/ICAR/newstudent/Appendix\\_L.pdf](http://www.gmu.edu/departments/ICAR/newstudent/Appendix_L.pdf))

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.

**ICAR's Policy:** Faculty require that all written work must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared to electronic databases. Faculty may at any time compare a student's written work against electronic databases/plagiarism detection software without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require work to be submitted in print and electronic form. Faculty are encouraged to require students to submit work through Blackboards Safe Assign program. Faculty may also directly submit work using the same system.

**MASON EMAIL ACCOUNTS:** Students must use their MasonLIVE email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

## University Resources and Assistance

### 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 contact 703-993-3642 or [malle2@gmu.edu](mailto:malle2@gmu.edu).

### The Writing Center

The Writing Center provides tutors who can help you develop ideas and revise papers at no charge. It can sometimes accommodate walk-ins, but generally it is best to call for an appointment. The services of the Writing Center are also available online.

**Location:** ARL311 **Contact:** 703. 993.4491 or <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>. It is a free writing resource that offers individual, group, and online tutoring.

## **Office for Disability Services**

*If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS*

The Office for Disability Services Resource Center assists students with learning or physical conditions affecting learning. Students with learning differences that require special conditions for exams or other writing assignments should provide documentation provided by the Disability Resource Center. Please see one of the instructors the first week of classes.

**Location:** SUB I, Room 222 **Contact:** 703.993.2474 [www.gmu.edu/student/drc/](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/)

**University Libraries -“Ask a Librarian” :** <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):** (703) 993-2380; <http://caps.gmu.edu>

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.