

CONF 801

INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION

Fall 2014

Monday 4:30-7:10 pm., Rm. 476 Founders Hall

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Hours: Monday 3:00-4:00 pm and by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to the course and to S-CAR. This class is designed as an introduction to the field of Conflict Analysis and Resolution for entering doctoral students. As an introduction and as the first course that most S-CAR doctoral students will take, it is deliberately broad. Given this, your instructor *knows* how much we are missing, leaving out, or only glancing at. Other courses at S-CAR develop one or another of the themes in this introduction in greater depth—or touch on matters left untouched here.

The sorts of social conflicts studied by S-CAR are mostly what those in our field have called deep-rooted, protracted, or intractable ones, conflicts which, even when ostensibly about material resources or interests, are also entangled with issues of ethnicity, race, religion, nationalism—with matters of *identity*. S-CAR was founded on asserting the unity of the field of Conflict Analysis and Resolution at all levels of social conflict—from interpersonal to global—and on the crucial linkage between theory and practice in the field. Thus the course examines a range of issues in the field, including the sources and dynamics of social conflict and different approaches to its management, resolution, transformation, and what is today called peacebuilding. After some readings describing the development (and the “ethos”) of the field, the first part of the course focuses upon “theory” broadly defined, and thus on conflict analysis. The second part of the course explores different modes of “practice” in conflict resolution, especially forms of third party interventions. Given that the “third party” is often an outsider to the conflict, an *intervener* in other peoples’ struggles, critical questions of ethics are never far behind any consideration of intervention.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The class will be run as a seminar with an emphasis on discussion. It is therefore imperative that students read the assigned books and articles *prior* to class. Active participation based on thoughtful consideration of the literature and experience in class discussions will be expected. There is a lot of reading assigned but it is a must for the

success of this kind of class and will prepare you for future classes in S-CAR and, equally importantly, for the undertaking of your own original work in a doctoral project.

Final grades will be based on classroom participation (20%); three essays written to specific topics or questions based on our readings, assigned and due as indicated on the syllabus (15% each, for 45%; each essay to be between 1000-1250 words in length); and a final “literature review” paper (35%), details of which to be discussed later. Missing more than one class will affect your participation. Late papers will be penalized so please ensure that deadlines are met.

I will divide the class in two and on December 1 and December 8 each half of the class will present their literature review. We will organize panels and each student will have 12-15 minutes to present. The final paper will be due on Wednesday December 10 at 4:30. Hardcopy preferred, though keep an electronic copy for your files.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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 consult with me. Although I will want all written assignment in hardcopy (unless impossible for other reasons) please keep electronic copies available of all assignments. You will find a copy of Honor Code at academicintegrity.gmu.edu.

GMU Email Accounts

Students must activate their GMU email accounts to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. This is the only address I will use.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center is a free writing resource that offers individual, group, and online tutoring. For general questions and comments please contact us at wcenter@gmu.edu or call: 703-993-4491.

Office of 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 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

READINGS

Course readings will come from four sources: (1) Assigned books, available at the Arlington Bookstore; (2) E-reserves, available through Blackboard at course CONF 801/001 Fall 2014 (3) E-journals, also available online through the Mason Libraries, and (4) occasional supplementary readings and material sent directly to you from me, via your GMU e-mail account.

Books (Required)

Kevin Avruch, *Context and Pretext in Conflict Resolution: Culture, Identity, Power and Practice* (marked as C&P)

Roger Fisher, W. Ury and B. Patton, *Getting to Yes* (revised ed., 1991)

John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace*

C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*

Oliver Ramsbotham, T. Woodhouse & H. Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*.
Third edition

Oliver Richmond, *A Post-Liberal Peace*

Books (recommended)

John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace*

John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of Peace*

For those with *no* or little background in the field, the following is recommended as supplementary reading:

Dean Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim, *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate & Settlement*.
Third edition

COURSE PROGRAM

Please note: because of travel on my part and a scheduled Labor Day University recess, a make-up class will meet Monday, December 8; please adjust your own

schedule commitments to ensure your presence and participation at this make-up class. The course program, below, reflects this schedule.

Please read C. Wright Mills' *The Sociological Imagination* prior to our first meeting.

- 1. Week of (8/25): Course Orientation. Some basic questions to consider. What does Mills have to teach us?**
Read: Mills; John Burton, "Conflict Resolution as a Political Philosophy" (E-reserve);
Recommended, John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination*
- 2. Week of (9/15): Key Ideas in the Development of the Field**
Read: Ramsbotham et al., chs. 1-2; Sandole, "Traditional Realism vs. the New Paradigm" (E-reserve); Avruch (C&P), ch. 2; Burton, "Needs Theory" (E-reserve); Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research" (E-reserves); Fisher et al. *Getting to Yes* (all); Avruch, "Does our Field Have a Centre?" (sent or E-reserves)
Essay 1 handout
- 3. Week of (9/22): Sources of Conflict-I: Persons and Identities**
Read: Daniel Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations of Intractable Conflicts," *American Behavioral Scientist* 50:11 (2007):1430-1453. Available through e-journals
Janice Stein, "Image, Identity, and Conflict Resolution," (E-Reserves)
Herbert Kelman, "Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation: A Social-Psychological Perspective on Ending Violent Conflict between Identity Groups," *Landscapes of Violence* 1:1 (2010). Available at <http://scholarworks.umass.edu/lov/vol1/iss1/5>
Peter Black, "Social Identity" (E-reserves);
Avruch (C&P) ch. 4
Essay 1 due
- 4. Week of (9/29): Sources of Conflict-II: States and Systems**
Read: Ramsbotham, chs. 3-4; Ayoob, "State Making..." (E-reserves); Collier et al., "Beyond Greed and Grievance..." *Oxford Economic Papers* 6:1 (2011):1027. Available through e-journals
- 5. Week of (10/6): Conflict Dynamics**
Read: Ramsbotham, ch. 5; Pruitt and Kim, "Escalation and Its Development" (E-reserves); Coleman et al. "Intractable Conflicts as an Attractor: A Dynamical Systems Approach to Conflict and Intractability," *American Behavioral Scientist* 50:11(2007):1454-1475. Available through e-journals; Azar, "Conflict Escalation and Conflict Resolution in an International Crisis: Suez," *Journal of*

Conflict Resolution 16:2(June 1972)183-201. Available through e-journals; C.R. Mitchell, "Conflict, Social Change, and Conflict Resolution: An Enquiry," Berghof Handbook Fund, at: http://www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue5_mitchell_lead-1.pdf

Essay 2 handout

6. Week of (10/14): NOTE: This is a Tuesday Class

Culture

Read: R. Cohen, "Language and Conflict Resolution: The Limits Of English," *International Studies Review* 3(1):25-51, 2001, E-reserves; Avruch (*C&P*), chs. 1, 3, 6; Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" at:

http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Acrobat/Huntington_Clash.pdf

Bond, "Mediation and Culture: The Example of the ICC International Commercial Mediation Competition" *Negotiation Journal* 29:3(July 2013): 315-328. Available through e-journals; Ramsbotham et al., ch. 15

Essay 2 due

7. Week of (10/20): Negotiation and Third Parties

Read: Review *Getting to Yes*; Ropers, "Roles and Functions of Third Parties in the Constructive Management of Ethnopolitical Conflicts," at:

<http://www.berghof-conflictresearch.org/documents/publications/boc14e.pdf>

Ron Fisher, "Interactive Conflict Resolution," (E-reserves); Avruch (*C&P*), ch. 7; Fisher and Keashley, "The Potential Complementarity of Mediation and Consultation within a Contingency Model of Third Party Consultation," *Journal of Peace Research* 28:1(1991):29-42. Available through e-journals; Saunders, "Prenegotiation and Circum-negotiation," (E-reserves); Pruitt, "Readiness Theory and the Northern Ireland Conflict," *American Behavioral Scientist* 50:11(July 2007):1520-1541. Available through e-journals

8. Week of (10/27): Third Parties: Assessment, Queries, Ethics

Read: Avruch (*C&P*), ch. 5; Ross, "Creating Conditions for Peacemaking: Theories of Practice in Conflict Resolution," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23:6(2000):1002-1034. Available through e-journals; Ross, "'Good Enough' Isn't So Bad: Thinking about Success and Failure in Ethnic Conflict Management," *Peace and Conflict* 6:1(2000):27-47. Available through e-journals; Laue and Cormick, "The Ethics of Intervention in Community Disputes" (E-

reserves); Schoeny and Warfield, "Reconnecting Systems Maintenance with Social Justice: A Critical Role for Conflict Resolution" (E-reserves); Mayer, "Conflict Resolution: A Field in Crisis" (E-reserves); Slim, "Dealing with Moral Dilemmas" (E-reserves)

9. Week of (11/3): Dilemmas of Power in Conflict Resolution

Read: Thucydides, "The Melian Dialogue" (sent and online); Rouhana and Korper, "Power Asymmetry and Goals of Unofficial Third Party Intervention in Protracted Intergroup Conflict," *Peace and Conflict* 3(1):1-17, 1997; Rouhana, "Group Identity and Power Asymmetry in Reconciliation Processes: The Israeli-Palestinian Case," *Peace and Conflict* 10(1):33-52, 2004. Both available through e-journals; Avruch (*C&P*), ch. 9; Mitchell, "Asymmetry and Strategies of Regional Conflict Reduction" (E-reserves); Ramsbotham et al., ch. 13

10. Week of (11/10): Toward Peacebuilding

Read: Lederach, *Building Peace* (all); Ramsbotham et al., chs.6-10; Avruch (*C&P*), ch. 8
Recommended, J.M Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of Peace*. The classic example of how *not* to "build peace." Many editions online: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/15776>

11. Week of (11/17): Peacebuilding: Critical Perspectives-I

Read: Ramsbotham et al., chs. 18, 19;
Richmond, *A Post-Liberal Peace*, chs. 1-4

12. Week of (11/24): Critical Perspectives-II, and Looking Back and Ahead

Read: Richmond, chs. 5-6; Ramsbotham et al., chs. 11, 20;
Review, Avruch, "Does Our Field Have a Centre?"
Essay 3 handout

13. Week of (12/1): Student Panels-I

Essay 3 due

14. Week of (12/8): Make-Up Class: Student Panels-II

Term paper due Wednesday 12/10 by 4:30 pm