

CONF 340 (001); Fall 2011
Global Conflict Analysis and Resolution
Class Time: Wednesday: 1:30-4:10; University Hall 1202

INSTRUCTOR

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 Office Hours: After class or by appointment

Course Description:

In recent decades, effects and destructive potential of global conflicts became more extensive. It is imperative to not only understand the ways in which conflicts develop and manifest themselves, but also the ways in which these conflicts have been managed.

This course is designed to help students understand and analyze a number of global events that result or may result in conflict situations. These events include resource-based challenges, people's mobility, nationalism and terrorism. The interdisciplinary nature of the Conflict Resolution field enables us to touch on many other academic disciplines, such as International Relations, Political Science, Economics, Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology to better understand and analyze global conflicts. The course addresses conflict theories, their development and practical application.

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

Course Requirements:

1) Class participation (10%): reflects active participation in the class discussions, demonstrated understanding of the course readings. Simply attending the class does not equal participation. Most classes will start with unannounced quizzes about the week's readings. Names will be called at random. Come prepared, always!

2) In-class test (20%): This will test your understanding of basic concepts as well as your ability to critically analyze conflict situations. The questions will be drawn from sections covered in the course preceding the test. This will be held in class on **October 12**

3) Take-Home Essay (20%): I will hand out several essay questions and you are asked to pick one, and write a 5 page essay based on the introductory section (including readings, theories and class discussions) of the class. In the paper, besides using class materials, students are expected to do a critical analysis. I will hand out the essay questions on **November 9** and is due in class on **November 16**

4) Group Presentation (20%): You will be a member of one of eight research teams (3-4 students max). The teams will prepare a class presentation (not a paper) of a case study of an international conflict. Each team will have 30 minutes to present its case study to the class. While it's fine for groups to divide project work among team members, the final presentation should represent a single and conceptually linked piece of work. In your presentation, you should map the conflict, analyze conflict resolution approaches that have been used and comment on the role of the international community in this conflict situation. I will provide more information on group presentation requirements in class. Presentations will be on November 30 and December 7. Each group is expected to submit a one-page proposal of your presentation. The proposal is not graded. It is for you to start thinking about your case study and working in the group, and for me to see what conflicts you have selected and provide feedback. Even though it's a group assignment, each participant will be graded individually using the 360 degree method. If a group is having trouble with a member not fulfilling his/her work obligation, then the group needs to bring the problem to the instructor's attention.

5) Final paper (30%): The final paper will cover materials from the entire course. You are required to critically reflect on the themes, conflict resolution theories and cases covered during the course. The final paper should be no more than 10 pages. Questions will be handed out on December 7 and due December 14 at 4pm in Robinson 365. I will provide you with more detailed guidelines in due course.

*****Late Work/ illness/ re-write**

Class assignments that are submitted late can be penalized by one point for each day they are late. If you have a documented emergency, special arrangements can be made with the instructor. Do not make a habit out of turning in your assignments late. We will discuss standards for specific assignments when the time arrives. Extensions are granted only in extreme cases such as illness or other family emergency and only where the student in question has established a track record of completing work on time. In most such cases, I will require certification of the situation. A student's procrastination in completing his/her work is not a basis for an extension. There will be no-rewrite of papers due to low grade.

Course Policy and Procedures

Classroom Etiquette: Please come to class on time and prepared. Turn off cell phones and other electronic devices. The use of laptops in class is for note-taking only! We will be discussing contentious political issues in this course. You are encouraged to express your opinion and diverse perspectives, however, be mindful and respectful of the sensitivities and views of others in your comments in class.

Academic Honesty and Collaboration: George Mason University has an Honor Code with guidelines regarding academic integrity and which is designed, "to promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community" (<http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/>). The Honor Code lays out strict penalties for cheating and plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense, and all written work for this course should include proper citations in a standard citation format (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.). You can choose any citation format, however, be consistent throughout your work. If you are unsure about how to cite a direct quotation or concept from the course or outside readings, then ask for help. Copies of common style manuals are available at the GMU library 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.

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.

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.

GRADES AND GRADING

I know that many of you are concerned about your grades and I will do everything in my power to help you throughout the course. I will not saddle you with high expectations without sufficient support. However, as discussed above, I have high standards for your work. For a typical assignment, I expect the following grade distribution:

- _ A: Truly outstanding work that shows creative original thinking, is nearly perfectly organized, and flawlessly written. This level of work forces me to think hard when I read it.
- _ B: Good work with a strong argument, sound organization, and solid writing. There are some relatively minor flaws in one or more of these areas, although the work clearly shows potential for an A level grade.
- _ C: About average or slightly below average. An overall solid job, but with more obvious organizational, interpretive, creative, and/or stylistic problems that permeate the paper.
- _ D: Failing by a small margin. Serious flaws in every aspect of the work: a lack of understanding of some basic principles, poor organization, and writing that makes it difficult for me to understand the author.
- _ F: Unacceptable and/or incomplete. Having such serious deficiencies that the student would need to start over to earn a passing grade.

Paper format: Papers should be typed, double-spaced, have 1" margins, and Times New Roman 12-point font. Make sure that your name, course number, and paper title is on the first page, and pages are numbered. Edit your papers carefully. If you need help, ask the instructor or refer to the GMU Writing Center <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>.

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 (<http://www2.gmu.edu/dpt/unilife/ods/>) to determine the possible accommodations you might need; and 2) contact the instructor to discuss reasonable accommodations.

Course Materials (Required):

Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse, T., and Miall, H. 2009 (2nd edition). *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Required (available in the GMU bookstore):

Additional course materials: This course will use e-reserve (password will be provided in class) and GMU blackboard. Course materials including syllabus, Power Point class notes, supplementary readings and other relevant materials will be available on E-Reserve and or GMU Blackboard (<http://courses.gmu.edu>).

If you have any questions not answered in this syllabus please feel free to ask me.

Course Schedule and Assignments:

Part A: Origin and Evolution of Conflict Resolution

August 31: Introductions, Review of syllabus, Expectations/ Concepts and Definitions; Fields and origin

Ramsbotham et al, Chapters 1, 2 and 3

L. Kriesberg, “The Growth of the Conflict Resolution Field”, in *Turbulent Peace (E reserve)*

September 7: Understanding the Sources and Dynamics of Global Conflict

Ramsbotham et al, Chapters 4 and 5

J. Levy, “International sources of interstate and intrastate War” in *leashing the dogs (E-reserve)*

Part B: Key themes in contemporary conflict

September 14: Identity and nationalism

S. Ryan, “Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict” in *Issues in World Politics (E reserve)*

North Korea and the DMZ (documentary)

September 21: Resources

- Collier, P. 2001. “Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy,” in Crocker et al (eds) *Turbulent Peace*, pp. 143-162. (E-reserve)

- Malone, D. and Sherman, J. 2007. “Economic Factors in Civil Wars,” in Crocker et al (eds) *Leashing the Dogs of War*, pp. 637-652. (E-reserve)

September 28 : Terrorism

- Ramsbotham et al., Chapter 11: “Terror and Global Justice.”
- Tim Dunne, “Terrorism”, in *Issues in World Politics (E reserve)*

October 5: Gender, Culture and religion
Ramsbotham et al., Chapter 12 and 15

October 12: TEST
In-Class Test
(Documentary)

Part C: Managing violent conflict: intervention and post-war reconstruction

October 19: Intervention (mediation and peace enforcement)
W. Zartman and Touval, International mediation, in *leashing the dogs of war* (E-reserve)
(NATO and Libya)

October 26: Peacekeeping and peacemaking

- Ramsbotham et al, Chapter 6 and 7
- M. Pugh, "Peacekeeping and Humanitarian intervention" in *Issues in World Politics*

November 2: Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Peacebuilding
Ramsbotham et al, Chapter 8 and 9

November 9: Reconciliation
Ramsbotham et al, Chapter 10

ESSAY QUESTIONS HANDED OUT

November 16: Ethics Dialogue, Discuss and Disagreement

Ramsbotham et al, Chapter 13 and 14
ESSAY ANSWERS DUE IN CLASS

Presentation of group projects

November 23:
THANKSGIVING RECESS (NO CLASS)

November 30:
Groups 1, 2, 3 and 4

December 7:
Groups 5, 6, 7, 8

FINAL QUESTIONS HANDED OUT

FINAL PAPER DUE DECEMBER 14 AT 4:00 PM ROBINSON B 365