

CONF 101
Conflict and Our World:
Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution
Fall 2009

Instructor: Agnieszka Paczynska
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00 pm – 1:15pm
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Office Hours: Tues. 10:00 -11:00 am

Across all human societies, conflict is part of daily life. Sometimes it may be an annoyance, such as arguing with a sibling over the last cookie; sometimes it is more serious, such as the debate over human cloning; and sometimes it is tragic, as in recent events in Darfur and Afghanistan. Conflict can be destructive, for example, when it damages relationships among neighbors or relatives or destroys homes and livelihoods. Conflict can also be constructive, as shown by the effects of civil rights demonstrations in the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s or the Solidarity movement in Poland in the 1980s. Our increased interconnection as a global society has heightened the need for more attention to determining how humanity can deal with conflict productively.

This course introduces the interdisciplinary study of conflict analysis and resolution. We will examine how and why conflict occurs in human society, and what we can do to mitigate its destructive aspects. The course includes an overview of the field including the central approaches to analyzing conflict, an extended case study of a conflict, an examination of several forms of intervention, and finally a consideration of reconciliation and sustainable peacebuilding. We will highlight the societal, structural, and cultural factors that play a part in conflict and its resolution. At the end of the course, you should be able to analyze a conflict, to appreciate the contextual factors that influence conflict, to know the major conflict resolution techniques, and to understand the complexity of the most pressing contemporary conflicts.

Attendance in class is not only mandatory but also crucial if you would like to succeed in this course. Some of the material will be discussed only in class and not in the readings. You should plan to complete the assigned readings prior to each class. Be sure to look up words that are unfamiliar to you but realize that some terms have specialized meanings in the field of conflict resolution. Ask in class if you have not understood a term or idea.

Classroom etiquette: Come to class on time and prepared. Turn off your cell phones, pagers, beepers, etc. Do not leave the room during class unless you have an emergency. Do not disturb others by talking, passing notes, playing video games, etc. Do not surf the net. Be mindful of the sensitivities of others in your comments in class; however, open discussion and dialogue are our goal.

Conflict 101 fulfills the University General Education requirement for Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Assignments, Percentages of Grade, Due Dates

Attendance and Participation	Assessed throughout the semester	15%
2 Short Papers (2 pages)	Due on September 22, November 3	20%
Two In-Class Exams	October 15, November 17	30%
Final Exam	Due December 15	35%

Make-up exams and extensions of time for assignments will be arranged ONLY for documented personal illness or family emergency. Students with documented disabilities should make arrangements early in the term by contacting Professor Paczynska.

Guidelines for preparing the short essays will be provided in class. The short essays will focus on real conflicts that you have analyzed on your own.

You are expected to abide by George Mason University's Honor Code in preparing all work for this class. If you have any questions about Honor Code issues (e.g., whether you are permitted to discuss an assignment with a fellow student) or are uncertain about how to cite a source, or if you have observed Honor Code violations, please contact Professor Paczynska.

Required Readings

Feargal Cochrane. *Ending Wars*. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2008

Dean G. Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim. *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement*. 3rd Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill 2004

It is highly recommended for this course, and for your undergraduate career, that you seek out information about current events in your community and in the world generally. This may be achieved through reading daily – either in hard copy or online – *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, or by listening to the BBC news or National Public Radio News among others. Please make your readings a central part of our discussions in class and do not be afraid to bring in views that stir up conversation, but keep in mind that real respect for the other is an ideal that is often more difficult to achieve than it is to intend.

Student Resources

GMU Writing Center

“The Writing Center seeks to foster a writing climate on campus and beyond by offering free writing support to George Mason students, faculty, staff and alumni. No matter what your writing abilities are, writing specialists can help you develop the skills you need to become a successful writer.

Free services include: One-on-one 45 minute sessions with a writing specialist; online writing lab; one-on-one sessions with an ESL specialist; workshops on such topics as documenting sources, grammar and punctuation; writing handouts on a variety of subjects; a library of

handbooks and writing manuals; [and an] online chat with a tutor about papers submitted to the Online Writing Lab” (<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 (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.

To achieve this goal, the university maintains and supports the Disability Resource Center Office, which is responsible for assuring that students receive the services and accommodations to which they are entitled. The professional 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>).

Library Services

The ICAR library liaison is Gretchen Reynolds (greynol3@gmu.edu). Do not hesitate to contact her with specific questions about holdings and research in these areas or whom to contact for materials still in the Fenwick Library on the Fairfax Campus.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

September 1- Introduction

September 3 – What is Conflict?
Pruitt and Kim, pp. 3-14

September 8 – Nature and Sources of Conflict I
Pruitt and Kim, pp. 15-36

September 10 – Nature and Sources of Conflict II
Pruitt and Kim, pp. 56-62; Avaruch

September 15 – Nature and Sources of Conflict III
Burton, 32-40; Galtung 39-53

September 17 – Nature and Sources of Conflict IV
Collier, 197-216

Analyzing Conflict

September 22 – Strategies - **First Short Paper Due**
Pruitt and Kim, pp. 37-56

September 24 – Tactics
Pruitt and Kim, pp. 63-84

September 29 – Approaches to analyzing and resolving conflict
Kriesberg, 455-476

October 1 – Case Study – Afghanistan I
List of relevant websites and news articles is at the end of the syllabus.

October 6 – Case study – Afghanistan II
List of relevant websites and news articles is at the end of the syllabus.

October 8 – Case Study – Immigration
List of relevant websites and news articles is at the end of the syllabus.

October 13 – Columbus Day, No class meeting

Resolving Conflict

October 15 – **EXAM ONE** – analyzing a conflict

October 20 - Mediation/Arbitration
Pruitt and Kim, 189-225

October 22 – Interpersonal Conflict
Pruitt and Kim, 226-258

October 27 - Group, organizational and public conflict,
Shlegel, 19-33, Barsh 192-197

October 29 – Ethnicity, religion and conflict,
Volkan, 19-28, and 36-49

Sustaining Peace and Contemporary Challenges

November 3 – War after the Cold War – **Second Short Paper Due**
Cochrane – 12-38

November 5 – Alternatives to Violence
Ackerman and Duvall, 305-333

November 10 – Reconciliation
Lederach – 23-35

November 12 – Negotiations
Cochrane – 70-100

November 17 – **EXAM TWO**

November 19 – Peacekeeping
Zartman and Touval, 437-454; Daniel, 1-22; Franke and Warnecke, 407-436*

November 24 – Peacebuilding
Fisher, 239-272; Barnett, Kim, O'Donnell, and Sitea, 35-58

November 26 – Thanksgiving, No class meeting

December 1 - Post-Conflict Reconstruction
Cochrane – 150-183

December 3 – Guest Lecturer

December 8 – Truth and Reconciliation
Barsalou, 1-12, Seils and Wierda, 1-20

December 10 – Review

FINAL EXAM: Due December 15

E-Reserve/E-Journal/Internet Sites Reading List

The following readings are available on e-reserves, internet sites, or e-journals

Avaruch, Kevin. 2002. "Cross-Cultural Conflict." In *The Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems*. Oxford, UK: UNESCO, Eolss Publishers. Access at: <http://www.eolss.net>

Burton, John. 1997. "Needs Theory." In *Violence Explained*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 32-40.

Galtung, Johan. 1999. "Cultural Violence." In *Violence and its Alternatives: An Interdisciplinary Reader*. Steger and Lind, ed. New York: St. Martin's, 39-53.

Collier, Paul, 2007. "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy." In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Olser Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 197-216.

Kriesberg, Louis. 2001. "Contemporary Conflict Resolution," In, *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Olser Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 455-476.

Schlegel, Alice. 2004. "Contentious But Not Violent: The Hopi of Northern Arizona." In *Keeping the Peace: Conflict Resolution and Peaceful Societies Around the World*. G. Kemp and D. Fry, eds., New York: Routledge, 19-34.

Barsh, Russel. 1999. "Indigenous Peoples, Racism, and the Environment." In *Violence and Its Alternatives: An Interdisciplinary Reader*. Steger and Lind, eds. New York: St. Martin's Press, 191-197.

Volkan, Vamik. 1997. "Ethnic Tents: Descriptions of Large-Group Identities," and "Chosen Trauma: Unresolved Mourning." In *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 19-28, 36-49.

Zartman, I. William, and Touval, Saadia. 2007. "International Mediation." In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Olser Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 437-454.

Daniel, Donald C. F. "Wither Peace Operations?" United States Institute of Peace Special Report, <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr215.pdf>

Franke, Volker C. and Warnecke, Andrea. June 2009. "Building Peace: An Inventory of UN Peace Missions Since the End of the Cold War." In *International Peacekeeping* (e-journals)

Fisher, Ronald, 1997. "Interactive Conflict Resolution." In *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 239-272.

Barnett, Michael, Hunjoon Kim, Madalene O'Donnell, and Laura Sitea. March 2007. "Peacebuilding: What is in a Name?" In *Global Governance* (e-journals)

Ackerman, Peter and Jack Duvall. 2000. "The American South: Campaign for Civil Rights." In *A Force More Powerful*. New York: Palgrave, 305-333.

Lederach, John Paul. 1997. "Reconciliation: the Building of Relationship." In *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 23-35.

Barsalou, Judy. April 2005. "Trauma and Transitional Justice in Divided Societies," United States Institute of Peace Special Report 135, <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr135.pdf>

Seils, Paul and Wierda, Marieke. June 2005. "The International Criminal Court and Conflict Mediation." *Occasional Paper Series*, International Center for Transitional Justice, <http://www.ictj.org/images/content/1/1/119.pdf>

Afghanistan Case Study Readings

Barnett Rubin, "The Transformation of the Afghan State,"

<http://www.usip.org/files/resources/foa.pdf>

Library of Congress, "Afghanistan: Country Profile,"

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Afghanistan.pdf>

Afghanistan Conflict Monitor

http://www.afghanconflictmonitor.org/conflict_profiles.html

"Afghanistan and Pakistan on the Brink: Framing US Policy Options," CSIS report, February 2009

http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/090221_barton-afpakonthebrink.pdf

Immigration Conflicts in Loudoun and Prince William Counties Case Study Readings

Audrey singer, Jill H. Wilson, Brooke DeRenzis, "Immigrants, Politics, and Suburban Washington," Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2009/0225_immigration_singer/0225_immigration_singer.pdf

Websites

Mexicans Without Frontiers

<http://www.mexicanossinfronteras.org/>

Help Save Manassas

<http://www.helpsavemanassas.org/>

Help Save Virginia

<http://helpsavevirginia.com/>

Reston Interfaith (who helped set up day laborer center in Herndon)

http://www.restoninterfaith.org/pages/page.asp?page_id=15340

La Voz of Loudoun (Immigrant Advocacy Group)

<http://www.lavozloudoun.org/>