

CONF 501.001
Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution

Fall 2009

Truland Building 648

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Office Hours: Mondays 6:00-7:15 and Wednesdays 2:00-5:00

Description:

This course introduces students to central themes, categories and doctrines of conflict analysis and resolution. In analysis we seek an understanding of a conflict's social/political setting, the conditions that gave rise to negative relations among protagonists, and the conflict's root causes. Of course, such an understanding requires careful use of certain concepts, models and methodologies that, in effect, comprise the primary substance the field. Regarding resolution, scholar-practitioners agree that there are no "quick fixes" to protracted conflict and no one sort of intervention that suits all conflict settings. Minimally, any viable intervention should address the conflict's root causes, deal with long-term grievances that damaged the relationship between the protagonists, and strive towards long-term and meaningful resolution.

In Unit I, we examine the means for a systematical analysis of conflicts of various forms. Unit II addresses the major topics of conflict management and resolution. In Unit III we examine four case studies, each of which provides a context for applying the themes from Units I and II. Throughout the course, we prioritize the tasks of reflecting critically on conflicts, drawing attention to its conditions, causes, and dynamics, as well as an evaluation of "what works" (or not) from various interventions.

Objectives

- a) Introduction to a systematic study of analysis and resolution of conflicts
- b) Examine alternative models for the causes of protracted conflicts.
- c) Demonstrate how skillful intervention by a practitioner requires critical reflection on the techniques deployed.
- d) Test interventionist techniques against case studies, revealing comparative strengths and weaknesses of various methods.
- e) Show the ethical underpinnings of practice by exposing for each method the value-commitments towards, for example, peace, equality, or justice.
- f) Show the close connections among conflict theories, research findings, and modes of practice.

Texts:

John Paul Lederach, Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies Washington, DC. United States Institute of Peace, 1997. ISBN 1-878379-73-9 (paper). [BP]

Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall, Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management sand Transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Oxford: Polity Press, 2005 (Second Edition): 0-7456-3213-0 (paperback) [CCR]

William Zartman, ed., PEACEMAKING IN INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT: Methods and Techniques (Revised Edition) United States Institute of Peace [PIC]

Sandole, Byrne, Sandole-Staroste and Senehi, eds., Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Routledge, 2009 [HCAR] [distributed electronically]

Additional Chapters:

Nicole Ball, "The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn Societies," in Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, eds., Turbulent Peace: the Challenges of Managing International Conflict, Chapter 42 (ereserve).

Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, peace and peace research. Journal of Peace Research, 6 (3): 167-191. (ereserve)

Avruch, Kevin and Black, Peter (1993). "Conflict resolution in intercultural settings: problems and prospects," in Dennis J.D. Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe, (Eds). Conflict resolution theory and Practice. Manchester University Press. (ereserve)

All three chapters are available through the Library's ereserve system.

Using the following link to search Electronic Reserves

<http://furbo.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/ers/OSCRgen.cgi>

Course: 501-001/ Instructor Rothbart

Password: introduction

Do not use spaces or caps for passwords

Teaching Technology: Blackboard

courses.gmu.edu

username:

password:

We use Blackboard for the following:

Syllabus

Links to Ereserve articles

Case Studies:

Case #1: MOVE

Assefa and Wharharftig, The MOVE crisis in Philadelphia and video.

Case #2 South Africa

Waldmeir, Patti. Anatomy of a Miracle: The end of apartheid and the birth of the new South Africa. W. W. New York: Norton and Company.

[Group Presentations]

Case #3 Rwanda

Arthur Jay Klinghoffer, The International Dimension of genocide in Rwanda.

[Group Presentations]

Case #4 Copper Strike

Kingslover, Barbara (1989). Holding the Line: Women in the great Arizona Mind Strike of 1983.

Course Schedule:

Week 1 (August 31) Introduction. Course themes, objectives, requirements, and activities.

UNIT I: Sources of Protracted Conflict

Week 2: (September 14) Topic: What is Conflict Theory?

Readings:

Kriesberg, "The Conflict Resolution Field: Origins, Growth, and Differentiation," Chapter 1, PIC.

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Introduction to Conflict Resolution: Concepts and Definitions" Chapter 1, CCR.

Celia Cook-Huffman, "The role of identity in conflict", Chapter 1, pp. 19-31, HCAR.

Week 3 (September 21) The Nature of Violent Conflict

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Conflict Resolution: Foundations, Constructions and Reconstructions," Chapter 2, CCR.

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Statistics of Deadly Quarrels," Chapter 3, CCR.

Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, peace and peace research. Journal of Peace Research, 6 (3): 167-191. (e-reserve)

Week 4 (September 28) Conflict and Culture

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Understanding Contemporary Conflict" Chapter 4, CCR.

Avruch, Kevin and Black, Peter (1993). Conflict resolution in intercultural settings: problems and prospects. In Dennis J.D. Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe, (Eds). Conflict resolution theory and Practice. Manchester University Press. (E-Reserve)

Kevin Avruch, "Culture theory, culture clash, and the practice of conflict resolution" Chapter 17, pp. 241-255, HCAR.

[Take-home exam distributed in class, due next class.]

UNIT II: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION

Week 5 (October 5) Ending Violent Conflicts

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Containing Violent Conflict: Peacekeeping" Chapter 6, CCR.

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Ending Violent Conflict: Peacemaking" Chapter 7, CCR.

Jacob Bercovitch, "Mediation in International Conflict: An overview of Theory, A Review of Practice," Chapter 4, PIC.

Week 6 (October 13 [Monday classes meet Tuesday]) The Social Psychology of Conflict

Herbert Kelman, "Social-Psychological Dimensions of International Conflict" Chapter 2, PIC.

Ronald J. Fisher, "Interactive Conflict Resolution" Chapter 6, PIC.

Benjamin J. Broome, "Building relational empathy through an interactive design process" chapter 13, pp. 184-200, HCAR.

Week 7 (October 19) Post-Conflict Reconstruction

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Post-War Reconstruction" Chapter 8, CCR.

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Peacebuilding" Chapter 9, CCR.

Nicole Ball, "The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn Societies," in Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, eds., Turbulent Peace: the Challenges of Managing International Conflict, Chapter 42 (ereserve).

Week 8: (Oct. 26) Reconciliation

John Paul Lederach, Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies. Washington, DC. United States Institute of Peace, 1997.

UNIT 3: Case Studies

Week 9 (November 2) Case Study: MOVE

Assefa and Wharharftig, The MOVE crisis in Philadelphia, et. and video.
[Group Presentation]

Week 10 (November 9) Case Study: South Africa

Waldmeir, Patti. Anatomy of a Miracle: The end of apartheid and the birth of the new South Africa. W. W. New York: Norton and Company.
[Group Presentation]

Rothbart and Korostelina, "The Enemy and the Innocent in Violent Conflict," in Chapter 6, HCAR.

Week 11 (November 16) Case Study: Rwanda

Arthur Jay Klinghoffer, The International Dimension of genocide in Rwanda.
[Group Presentation]

Week 12 (November 23) Case Study: Copper Strike

Kingslover, Barbara (1989). Holding the Line: Women in the great Arizona Mine Strike of 1983.
[Group Presentation]

UNIT 4: Integrating theory, research, and practice

Week 13 (November 30) Evaluation of CR Practice

Esra Cuhadar Gurkaynak, et. al., "Evaluation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding" Chapter 20, pp. 286-299, HCAR

Dennis J. D. Sandole, "Critical systematic inquiry in car" Chapter 30, pp. 420-436, HCAR.

Johan Galtung, "Toward a conflictology" Chapter 35, pp. 511-524, HCAR.

Week 14 (December 7) The future of the Field

Course Requirements:

Each class session will include a discussion-component that calls for active participation. Of course, regular attendance is expected.

The course grade will be determined by an evaluation of a take-home exam, a team presentation, a written paper, and a final exam.

1. Take-home Exam. A take home exam will be distributed during Session 5 and returned during class of session 6. 15% of course grade.
2. Team presentation. The class will be divided into teams of 4-5 students per team. Each team will select a case from one of the four cases provided. The primary objective of the team is to provide a critical reflection on the case, focusing on an analysis of the conflict setting, activities of conflict protagonists, the evaluation of interveners and an assessment of what went wrong and/or right. Such reflection draws attention to certain commitments that lie just below the surface of research activities, yet are pivotal to why and how conflict analysts do research. The background information is given in the readings provided, but the group is encouraged to rely on additional readings. Of course, the group is expected to rely on the concepts, models, and themes presented during the course. The presentations will be scheduled for Weeks 9, 10, 11, and 12. The grade that is given to each group will represent 25% of the course grade.
3. Term Paper. Each student will write a term paper that is at least 15 pages, double-spaced on the topic of the case study. [Refer to Appendix I of the ICAR Handbook.] The primary objective is to provide in some depth a critical reflection of the case that was given in the group project. The analysis must include an application of the topics, concepts, and themes of the course. The grade for the paper represents 25% of the course grade. The term paper is due Week 13, November 23 at 7:20.
4. Final Exam. The final examination is comprehensive of the course content. This will be distributed during session 14 (December 7), and due back on Monday, December 14 at 7:20. The grade for the exam represents 35% of the course grade.

HONOR POLICY

All students are expected to abide by the Honor Code:

Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work. Failure to comply with this code may result in academic penalty in accordance with the procedures of the Honor Committee.