

CONF 501.003
Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution
7:20 pm - 10:00 pm
Truland Bldg 647

Spring 2012
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Description

This course introduces students to the central themes, categories and doctrines of conflict analysis and resolution. Through analysis we acquire an understanding of a conflict's social/political setting, its root causes, the conditions that gave rise to negative relations among protagonists, and the consequences on the conflict parties and others. Particular attention is given to the sources of negativity among the conflict parties. Careful analysis of the conflict is critical to the work of conflict resolution practitioners. Not limited to one specific sort of intervention, conflict resolution refers to a range of possible activities that are intended to limit or reduce the negativities associated with relations among the conflict parties. Closely associated with such a goal are efforts by practitioners to settle, manage, mitigated, de-escalated, contained, terminated, prevented, or avoid conflicts. Of course, there are no "quick fixes" to any protracted conflict and no one sort of intervention that suits all conflict settings. Many viable interventions seek to 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, and Unit II addresses major topics of conflict management and resolution. Case studies are explored in both units. 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.

Required Textbooks

Bernard Mayer, The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution: A Practitioner's Guide, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. 2000. ISBN 0-7879-5019-X (hard.)

Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall, Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Third Edition. Oxford: Polity Press, 2005 (Second Edition): 0-7456-3213-0 (paperback)

Sandole, Byrne, Sandole-Staroste and Senehi, eds., Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Routledge, 2009. (paperback)

Required Articles, Chapters and Reports [Available in Blackboard]

Human Rights Watch, Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda
<http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1999/rwanda/rwanda0399.htm>

General Template for Research Design and Proposal

Tanner, Victor, Rule of Lawlessness: Roots and Repercussions of the Darfur Crisis. Sudan Advocacy Coalition.

Johan Brosché and Daniel Rothbart, "Violence in Darfur," in Violent Conflict and Peacebuilding: The Continuing Crisis in Darfur, Chapter 1.

Roger Coate and Jerel Rosati, "Human Needs in World Society," Chapter 1 in the Power of Human Needs in World Society.

John W. Burton, "Human Needs Versus Societal Needs," Chapter 3 in the Power of Human Needs in World Society.

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.

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

Human Security Report: Counting the Indirect Costs of War

Daniel Rothbart and Karina V. Korostelina, "Moral Denigration of the Other" Chapter 3, in Identity, Morality, and Threat: Studies in Violent Conflict

Simulation of a Problem Solving Workshop

Sudan Task Group, Concept Proposal.

Gerd Junne and Willemijn Verkoren, "The Challenges of Postconflict Development," in Postconflict Development, edited by Gerd Junne and Willemijn Verkoren, Chapter 1.

Ellen Taylor-Powell, Sara Steel, Mohammad Douglah, "Planning a Program Evaluation."

Teaching Technology: Blackboard

mymason

<https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>

username:

password:

Course Schedule:

UNIT I: CONFLICT ANALYSIS

Week 1: January 25. Introduction. Course themes, objectives, requirements, and activities.

Week 2: February 1. What are Conflicts?

Bernard Mayer, The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution: A Practitioner's Guide, Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 3-49.

Ramsbotham, et. al., "Introduction to Conflict Resolution: Concepts and Definitions" Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Chapter 1.

Ramsbotham, et. al., "Conflict Resolution: Foundations, Constructions and Reconstructions," Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Chapter 2.

Human Rights Watch, "Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda"
<http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1999/rwanda/rwanda0399.htm>

Week 3: February 8. Core Concepts of Conflict Analysis

Ramsbotham, et. al., "Statistics of Deadly Quarrels and Measurements of Peace," Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Chapter 3.

Human Security Report: "Counting the Indirect Costs of War"

General Template for Research Design and Proposal

Week 4: February 15. The continuing Crisis in Darfur

Tanner, Victor, Rule of Lawlessness: Roots and Repercussions of the Darfur Crisis Sudan Advocacy Coalition

Brosché and Rothbart, "Violence in Darfur," Violent Conflict and Peacebuilding: The Continuing Crisis in Darfur, Chapter 1

Week 5: February 22. From Needs Deprived to Conflicts

Roger Coate and Jerel Rosati, "Human Needs in World Society," Chapter 1 in the Power of Human Needs in World Society.

John W. Burton, "Human Needs Versus Societal Needs," the Power of Human Needs in World Society, Chapter 3.

Week 6: February 29. Alternative Conceptions of Conflict

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.

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Understanding Contemporary Conflict" Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Chapter 4.

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

Week 7: March 7. The Social Psychology of Conflict

Bernard Mayer, The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution: A Practitioner's Guide, Chapters 3 and 4, pp. 50-93.

Celia Cook-Huffman, "The role of identity in conflict", Chapter 1, pp. 19-31, in Sandole, et. al., eds., Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Herbert Kelman, "Social-Psychological Dimensions of International Conflict" Chapter 12, in Sandole, et. al., eds., Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Daniel Rothbart and Karina V. Korostelina, "Moral Denigration of the Other" Chapter 3, in Identity, Morality, and Threat: Studies in Violent Conflict

UNIT II: CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Week 8: March 21. What is Resolution?

Bernard Mayer, The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution: A Practitioner's Guide, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. pp. 97-213.

Week 9: March 28. Peacemaking

Ramsbotham, et. al., "Containing Violent Conflict: Peacekeeping" Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Chapter 6.

Ramsbotham, et. al., "Ending Violent Conflict: Peacemaking" Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Chapter 7.

Week 10: April 4. Problem Solving Workshop-Simulation 1

Ronald J. Fisher, "Interactive Conflict Resolution" Chapter 23, in Sandole, et. al., eds., Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Sudan Task Group, "Darfur 2009-2010: toward breaking the impasse: an inclusive consultation"

Simulation of a Workshop in Conflict Resolution

Week 11: April 11. Problem Solving Workshop-Simulation 2

Week 12: April 18. Post-Conflict Reconstruction

Ramsbotham, et. al., "Post-War Reconstruction" Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Chapter 8

Ramsbotham, et. al., "Peacebuilding" Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Chapter 9.

Gerd Junne and Willemijn Verkoren, "The Challenges of Postconflict Development," in Postconflict Development, edited by Gerd Junne and Willemijn Verkoren, Chapter 1.

Week 13: April 25. Evaluation of CR Practice

Esra Cuhadar Gurkaynak, et. al., "Evaluation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding" Chapter 20, pp. 286-299 in Sandole, et. al., eds., Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Ellen Taylor-Powell, Sara Steel, Mohammad Douglah, "Planning a Program Evaluation."

Week 14: May 2. Integrating theory, research, and practice. The future of the Field

Ramsbotham, et. al., "Reconciliation" Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Chapter 10.
Dennis J. D. Sandole, "Critical systematic inquiry in car" Chapter 30, pp. 420-436, in Sandole, et. al., eds., Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

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 evaluation of a (1) a mid-term exam, (2) Research design #1, (3) Research Design #2, and (4) a final exam.

1. Midterm Exam.

A take home exam will be distributed on March 7 [Week 7] and due March 21 [Week 8] in class. 30% of course grade.

2. Research Design #1

Objectives: The primary objective of this paper is to formulate a design plan for some possible research on a topic in conflict analysis or conflict resolution. The particular topic that you select can be drawn from the organizational, communal, national, or international level. You should select a topic that is relatively small-scale so as to avoid the difficulties of expending an enormous amount of time gathering and analyzing data. Data gathering can be done through interviews, observations, questionnaires, or a combination of these. For example, if you are researching the opinions of members of a particular ethnic community and do not have much funding, then you should plan on interviewing 20-30 people from such a local community.

Structure of Research Design.

Your research plan will present a particular topic of study in analysis or resolution, why the topic is important for our field, the primary research questions that you seek to answer, the methodology for collecting data and for analyzing data, and a list of important references that are relevant to you topic. Study carefully the template for research design/proposal. Organize your plan according to the following sections, as defined in the template.

1. Title
2. Summary of your research
3. Statement of the Problem
4. Research Objectives/Questions

5. Methodology
 - (a) Operational definitions [including reference to a particular conflict theory]
 - (b) Type of Study
 - (c) Universe of Study
 - (d) Data collection procedure
 - (e) Method of Analysis

Specifics.

Your answers will be evaluated by the following factors: importance of research problem to conflict analysis and/or resolution, clarity and relevance of research questions, clarity and specificity of the methodology, and the overall coherence of the plan. The research paper will be 8-10 pages in length double space. The due date is Wednesday, Week 9: March 28 during class, hard-copy. Late papers will not be accepted. This research design 1 will count for 20% of your course grade.

3. Research Design #2

After I return your research design #1 with comments, suggestions, recommendation, you will resubmit with a revised version, including in your submission the original draft and my comments. The same format, objectives, and standards apply to research design #2. The due date is April 25 [Week 13] , hard-copy. This research design #2 will count for 20% of your course grade.

4. Final exam/report.

The exam questions will be given May 2 [Week 14] and due May 9. 30% of course grade.

HONOR POLICY

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

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. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct.

Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person

without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.