

CONF 501
INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION

Semester: Fall 2013

Class Time: Monday, 7:20-10:00

Location:

Arlington Campus

Instructor: Juliana E. Birkhoff, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: By appointment

Welcome to the course and to the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR). This class is an introduction to the field of conflict analysis and resolution, and as the first that many at S-CAR will take, it is deliberately broad. Other courses will develop one or other themes in this introduction in greater depth.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1) The course provides reviews conflict analysis and resolution research, theory, and practice. The course prepares students to think analytically about social conflicts and use various models to understand conflict dynamics, processes, and levels of analysis.
- 2) Participants will learn to connect particular forms of analysis with the theoretical assumptions that underpin them. Course participants will critically examine the underlying assumptions of theories of conflict, and their application in resolution.
- 3) The class begins the exchange of experience between students and faculty through discussions, written assignments, and in-class activities.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

- 1) Consistent attendance. As with all classes at ICAR, in order to obtain a passing grade a student needs to attend classes regularly. Excessive absences will result in a reduced grade.
- 2) Effective preparation. There will be guided discussions in each class and your participation is essential. The discussions are not based on your opinion, but on class readings. If you do not complete the readings before the class, you will not be able to participate in class discussions and furthermore, will not be prepared for the exams.
- 3) Class participation. The class will be highly interactive and your contributions will help ensure the success of the class. The class format consist of large group discussions, small group discussion, exercises, class activities, etc.
- 4) Course completion. In keeping with departmental policy, incomplete grades will be given only in cases of extraordinary personal or immediate family illness.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Each assignment will be graded according to the point scale outlined below. The maximum total points are 100. The final grade for this course will be based on the GMU system (outlined in the

catalog), using a passing scale of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, etc. For more information on grading, see the University Catalog.

<http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/graduate.html>

1) Mid-term take home exam and final take home exam (Mid-Term up to 20 points, Final Exam up to 25 points) to maximize in-class time; both the mid-term and final will be take-home exams. The final exam will be cumulative, with more emphasis on the material from the last part of the semester.

2) Group case study project (Up to 25 points of your final grade)

The group case study project will include three or four class groups, each analyzing a separate conflict. These groups will be formed during the third class and will work throughout the semester to study a particular conflict from optional readings. The groups will work together to apply the concepts, theories, and ideas presented in the course to analyze a conflict and suggest a conflict resolution strategy. Groups will meet occasionally during class time, but outside meetings will also be necessary. At the end of the semester, each group will make a formal presentation to the class and provide the instructor with a copy of the presentation materials. Participants are encouraged to be creative and use different approaches in their presentations.

Group Case Studies Topics:

- 1) Oil and Nigeria (environmental)
- 2) The Hatfield's and the McCoy's (Class and Culture)
- 3) Rwanda (ethnicity)
- 4) Copper Strike (Labor and class)

3) Individual analytical case study (Up to 25 points of your final grade) on a specific conflict. Students will be responsible for providing an overview of a conflict of their choice, an analysis of the current situation and its dynamics, and propose potential avenues of resolution using class and outside materials. The assignment could consist of an academic paper (15-20 pages double space), multimedia, video, etc. You need to decide the topic and the form of the assignment (in consultation with the instructor) by the fourth week of the course. The goal of this paper is to apply the concepts from class to analyzing and understanding the case study topic. Therefore general background information on the conflict can be summarized in several pages with the bulk of the paper demonstrating ability to conduct the analysis.

4) Participation (Up to 5 points). All students are encouraged to attend class and actively participate in class discussions, assignments, etc. If a student has excessive absences then his or her participation grade may be reduced.

REQUIRED BOOKS

Kriesberg, Louis and Bruce Dayton Constructive Conflicts. From Escalation to Resolution. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 4th edition

Publication Date: January 16, 2012 | ISBN-10: 1442206845 | ISBN-13: 978-1442206847 |
Edition: 4th Edition

http://www.amazon.com/Constructive-Conflicts-Escalation-Louis-Kriesberg/dp/1442206845/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1377628293&sr=1-1

Schellenberg, James, Conflict Resolution: Theory, Research and Practice, State University of New York, 1996, Publication Date: September 26, 1996 | ISBN-10: 0791431029 | ISBN-13: 978-0791431023 | Edition: 1

http://www.amazon.com/Conflict-Resolution-Theory-Research-Practice/dp/0791431029/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1377628809&sr=1-1

Menkel-Meadow, Carrie, Lela Porter Love and Andrea Schneider Mediation: Practice, Policy, and Ethics, Aspen Publishers, 2006 | ISBN-10: 073554445X | ISBN-13: 978-0735544451

http://www.amazon.com/Mediation-Practice-Professor-Carrie-Menkel-Meadow/dp/073554445X/ref=sr_1_6?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1377629728&sr=1-6

OR

Menkel-Meadow, Carrie J. Mediation: Practice, Policy, and Ethics, Second Edition [Hardcover], Aspen Publishers, 2013 | ISBN-10: 1454802626 | ISBN-13: 978-1454802624 | Edition: 2

http://www.amazon.com/Mediation-Practice-Policy-Ethics-Second/dp/1454802626/ref=sr_1_3?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1377629209&sr=1-3

There are two editions; the 2013 edition is updated and useful, but a little more expensive. I will leave it up to each student to decide which one to purchase.

CASE STUDY BOOKS

Oriola Temitope B, Criminal Resistance? The Politics of Kidnapping Oil Workers Ashgate Publishers, 2013 | ISBN-10: 1409449912 | ISBN-13: 978-1409449911 |

http://www.amazon.com/Criminal-Resistance-Kidnapping-Interdisciplinary-Relations/dp/1409449912/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1377630351&sr=1-1&keywords=the+politics+of+kidnapping+oil+workers

“Hatfields and McCoys”; History Channel, <http://www.history.com/shows/hatfields-and-mccoys>

http://shop.history.com/hatfields-mccoys-dvd/detail.php?p=372995&v=history_show_hatfields_mccoys

Waller, Altina; Feud: Hatfields, McCoys, and Social Change in Appalachia, 1860-1900, University of North Carolina Press, 1988

http://www.amazon.com/Feud-Hatfields-Appalachia-1860-1900-Morrison/dp/0807842168/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1377630646&sr=1-1&keywords=altina+waller

Rosenblum, Jonathan, Copper Crucible: How the Arizona Miners' Strike of 1983 Recast Labor-Management Relations in America, ILR Press, Second Edition, 1998 ISBN: 978-0-8014-8554-1

http://www.amazon.com/Copper-Crucible-Arizona-Labor-Management-Relations/dp/0801485541/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1377629808&sr=1-1&keywords=Copper+Crucible%3A+How+the+Arizona+Miners%27+Strike+of+1983+Recast+Labor-Management+Relations+in+America

Gourcevitch, Phillip. We Wish To Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998.

http://www.amazon.com/Wish-Inform-Tomorrow-Killed-Families/dp/0312243359/ref=sr_1_fkmr0_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1377630694&sr=1-1-fkmr0&keywords=phillip+gurevitch+rwanda

GENERAL FORMAT AND TIMING FOR THE CLASS

7:20-7:30p.m. Current events, updates, questions from last class

7:30-8:30p.m. Short Presentation, Questions and Discussion

8:30-8:45p.m. Break

8:45-9:45p.m. Practice Applying the Concept

9:45-10:00p.m. Class reflections, summarization, next class

WEEK ONE

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Overview of the course
- 3) What is conflict? How do you define it? What does it look like? How do you know when you or someone else is in conflict?

WEEK TWO

Labor Day-No Class

WEEK THREE

- 1) What is "The Field?"
- 2) Values?
- 3) Assumptions?
- 4) Practice?
- 5) Research?

Readings:

Schellenberg, Chapters 1 and 2

Menkel Meadow Chapter 1 and Chapter 3

Burton, "Conflict resolution as a political philosophy" (E-Reserve)

Galtung, "Violence, peace, and peace research" (E-Reserve)

All case study groups are finalized

WEEK FOUR

- 1) How do conflicts start?
- 2) What "causes" conflict?

Readings:

Chapters 1-3 Kriesberg

Chapters 3-6 Schellenberg

Submit final subject for individual analytic case study

WEEK FIVE

- 1) Escalatory processes
- 2) How do grievances become disputes?
- 3) Disputes become conflicts?

Readings:

Chapters 4-6 Kriesberg

Jordan, Thomas. "Glasl's Nine Stage Model of Conflict Resolution" Mediate.com, posted October, 2000 <http://www.mediate.com/articles/jordan.cfm>

Brahm, Eric. "Conflict Stages." Beyond Intractability. Eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess. Conflict Information Consortium, University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted: September 2003 <<http://www.beyondintractability.org/bi-essay/conflict-stages>>

First Take Home Exam Handed Out at End of Class

WEEK SIX

- 1) Strategies and tactics
- 2) How do we understand what people do in conflict?

Readings:

Pruitt, Rubin, and Kim Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate and Debate, chapters 3 and 4 on e-reserve

Thomas, Kenneth "Conflict And Conflict Management: Reflections And Update" Journal of Organizational Behavior Volume 13, Issue 3, pages 265–274, May 1992 e-reserve

Return Take Home Exam at Beginning of Class

WEEK SEVEN

- 1) How is conflict handled?
- 2) What are the differences between approaches?
- 3) How do you judge quality?
- 4) Appropriateness?

Readings:

Menkel-Meadow, chapters 2-4

Schellenberg, chapters 7-9

WEEK EIGHT

- 1) How is conflict handled (part two)

Readings:

Kriesberg, chapters 7 and 8

Schellenberg, chapters 10 and 11

Menkel-Meadow, chapter 6

WEEK NINE

- 1) How do conflicts "end"?
- 2) Outcomes from conflict handling methods?

Readings:

Kriesberg, chapter 9 and 10

Menkel-Meadow, chapter 7

WEEK TEN

- 1) How do different social dynamics affect how we evaluate the conflict handling method and the outcome?

Readings:

Avruch, Kevin & 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: integration and application. Manchester University Press. E-reserve
Menkel-Meadow chapter 9 and 14

WEEK ELEVEN

- 1) Case study presentations

WEEK TWELVE

- 1) Case study presentations

WEEK THIRTEEN

- 1) Practice differences-Multi Party negotiation and mediation

Readings

Menkel Meadow chapter 11 and 12
Susskind, Lawrence Environmental Mediation and the Accountability Problem. In Vermont Law Review, Vol. 6, No. 1 Spring 1981. E-reserve
Susskind, Lawrence, Towards a Theory of Environmental Dispute Resolution. (With Alan Weinstein), In Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review, Vol. 6, No. 1, May 1981. E-reserve

WEEK FOURTEEN

- 1) Practice differences—International negotiation and mediation

Readings:

Menkel -Meadow chapter 14
Saunders, Harold.(1996). Prenegotiation and circum-negotiation: arenas of the peace process. In Chester A. Crocker and Fen Hampson (Eds.), Managing global chaos: sources of and responses to international conflict. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press. E reserve

Individual Analytic papers due

WEEK FIFTEEN

- 1) Synthesis

Readings:

Schellenberg, chapter 12
Kriesberg chapter 11

Final take home exam distributed, exam due on 12/19.

OTHER THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

If this is your first Masters Level course, it might help you understand the requirements by understanding, generally, the difference in undergraduate work and graduate school.

In grammar school, you learned facts, terms, basic concepts and answers. You also learned how to spell, how to write clear sentences and short papers. By middle and high school developed your ability to comprehend facts and ideas by organizing, comparing, translating, interpreting, giving descriptions, and stating the main ideas. You learned how to do research and how to organize and present your research clearly and concisely. In your undergraduate programs, you learned how to apply knowledge to problems or new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different way. You learned how to combine different sources into a written product that respected sources and was clearly and persuasively written.

In graduate school, you will deepen your ability to apply knowledge to solve problems. You will also develop analytical skills. You will demonstrate that you can examine and break information into parts by identifying assumptions, motives, or causes. You will demonstrate your ability to analyze how elements relate to each other and how principles are organized. You will be able to make inferences and find evidence to support generalizations. You should already know how to write organized papers clearly, accurately, persuasively and with appropriate citations.
(Adapted from Bloom 1956 and Pohl, et al 2000)

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see contact and me the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

The Writing Center is available to all Mason students and offers online and individual consultations as well as workshops and mini-courses. Writers at all levels can benefit. Each Mason campus has a location. You can find them on the Arlington Campus in the Original Building, Room 334C, by phone at 703- 993-4491 or online at <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

Students looking for suggestions for formatting and style options may consult the ICAR Style Sheet for Academic Writing http://icar.gmu.edu/newstudent/Appendix_I.pdf
Students should also read the statement of ICAR's academic standards http://icar.gmu.edu/newstudent/Appendix_L.pdf

The English Language Institute offers free English language tutoring to non-native English speaking students who are referred by a member of the GMU faculty or staff. For more information contact 703-993-3642 or malle2@gmu.edu.

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. I will report all violations of the Honor Code to the Honor Committee for review.