

**CONF 101, Section 002**  
**Conflict and Our World:**  
**Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution**  
**Spring 2013**

Instructor: Terrence Lyons  
Thursdays, 10:30-11:45  
Classroom: University Hall 1201

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Office Hours: Thursdays, 9:30 to 10:30 or  
by appointment

Recitation Sections  
Tuesdays, 10:30-11:45

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 gun control or immigration; 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 conflicts occur in human society, and what we can do to mitigate their destructive aspects while reinforcing their constructive potential. 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, appreciate the contextual factors that influence conflict, know the major conflict resolution techniques, and understand the complexity of the most pressing contemporary conflicts.

Attendance in both the lecture and recitation classes 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.

We will have three Experiential Learning Activities in your discussion section on February 12, February 26, March 5, April 16, and April 23. These are essential for the course and you will have graded assignments based on each.

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 check email or surf the web. 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 and includes participation in recitation section	10%
2 Reflection Papers on Experiential Learning Activities, 10% each Due on March 19 and April 30	20%
2 Short Papers (3 pages), 10% each Due on February 12 and March 12	20%
One In-Class Midterm Exam Held in recitation section February 19	20%
Final Exam Held on May 14	30%

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 Lyons.

Guidelines for preparing the short essays will be provided in class.

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 Lyons.

## **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 School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution library liaison is Gretchen Reynolds ([greynol3@gmu.edu](mailto: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 in Fenwick Library.

## **Required Readings:**

These two books have been ordered at the University Bookstore.

Carolyn Nordstrom. *Shadows of War: Violence, Power and International Profiteering in the Twenty-First Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press 2004.

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

All other readings are available through the library e-reserve or e-journal services. The password for this class is “**conflict**.”

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. 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.

### **Week One – January 24 – Introduction – What is Conflict?**

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, pp. 3-36; Nordstrom pp. 5-17.

Recitation Section – January 22

### **Week Two – January 31 – Nature and Sources I**

Readings: Burton, pp. 32-40 (available through e-reserves); Nordstrom, pp. 19-69.

Recitation Section – January 29

### **Week Three – February 7 – Nature and Sources II**

Readings: Collier, pp. 197-216; Galtung pp. 39-53 (both available through e-reserves).

Recitation Section – February 5

### **Week Four – February 14 – Nature and Sources III**

Readings: Volkan, pp. 19-28, 36-49 (available through e-reserves); Nordstrom, pp. 71-137.

Recitation Section – February 12 – Experiential Learning Activity, “Mediated Perceptions”

**First Short Paper Due February 12**

### **Week Five – February 21 – Approaches to Analyzing Conflict I**

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, pp. 37-82; Kriesberg, pp. 455 – 476 (available through e-reserves).

Recitation Section – February 19

**Midterm Exam held during recitation section February 19**

### **Week Six – February 28 – Approaches to Analyzing Conflict II**

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, pp. 85-188.  
Recitation Section – February 26 – Experiential Learning Activity 1A –  
Analyzing Liberia

**Week Seven – March 7 – Third Party Roles**

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, pp. 226-258.  
Recitation Section – March 5 – Experiential Learning Activity 1B – Analyzing  
Liberia

**Week Eight – SPRING BREAK**

**Week Nine – March 21 – Mediation and Interactive Problem Solving**

Readings: Pruitt and Kim, pp. 189-225; Zartman and Touval, pp. 437- 454  
(available through e-reserves).  
Recitation Section – March 19  
**ELA Reflection Paper 1 Due March 19**

**Week Ten – March 28 – Alternatives to Violence**

Readings: Ackerman and Duvall, 305-333 (available through e-reserves).  
Recitation Section – March 26 – Video, *A Force More Powerful*

**Week Eleven – April 4 – Peacebuilding I – Civil Society**

Readings: Barnes, pp. 7-24; Belloni, pp. 182-210 (both available through e-  
reserves).  
Recitation Section – April 2  
**Second Short Paper Due April 2**

**Week Twelve – April 11 – Peacebuilding II – Reconciliation**

Readings: Lederach – pp. 23-35 (available through e-reserves).  
Recitation Section – April 9

**Week Thirteen – April 18 – Peacebuilding III – Statebuilding and Liberal Peace**

Readings: Hampson and Mendeloff, available through e-reserves.  
Recitation Section – April 16 – Experiential Learning Activity 2A – Designing  
an Intervention.

**Week Fourteen – April 25 – Peacebuilding IV – War and Peace**

Readings: Nordstrom, pp. 141-173; Goldstein, pp. 1-10.  
Recitation Section – April 23 – Experiential Learning Activity 2B – Designing  
an Intervention.

**Week Fifteen – May 2 – Integration**

Recitation Section – April 30  
**ELA Reflection Paper 2 Due April 30**

**FINAL EXAM – TUESDAY, May 14 10:30 am – 1:15 pm**

## **E-Reserve/E-Journal Reading List**

The following readings are available on e-reserves or 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.

Barnes, Catherine. "Weaving the Web: Civil Society Roles in Working with Conflict and Building Peace." In *People Building Peace II: Successful Stories of Civil Society*. Edited by Paul Van Tongeren, et al. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2005.

Belloni, Roberto. "Civil Society in War-to-Democracy Transitions." In *From War to Democracy: Dilemmas of Peacebuilding*. Cambridge University Press, 2008, 182-210.

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

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

Galtung, Johan. 1969. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6:3 (1969): 167-191.

Goldstein, Joshua S., 2011. *Winning the War: The Decline of Conflict Worldwide*. New York: Penguin, pp. 1-10.

Hampson, Fen Osler, and David Mendeloff. "Intervention and the Nation-Building Debate." In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.

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

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.

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.