

**Global Conflict Analysis and Resolution: Conf. 340, Fall 2010**  
**Monday, 7:20pm-10pm Innovation 205**

Instructor: Rabbi Bruce Aft 703-407-7690 [baft@gmu.edu](mailto:baft@gmu.edu) Voice Mail Usually Works Better!!!!

Office Hour: by appointment

**Course Description**

We are living during challenging times. The course will emphasize models of peace building through a discussion of *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, John Paul Lederach *Healing, The Heart of Conflict*, Mark Gopin, and *An Ordinary Man*, Paul Rusesabagina.

My goal in our class will be to present various sides of three major conflicts that impact today's world. We will be discussing the current situation in Israel, the Palestinian territories, and Gaza. We also will be talking about genocide and lessons we have learned or not learned from the European Holocaust, the Armenian Holocaust, Rwanda, and the current situation in Darfur. Finally, we will talk briefly about the United States's conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan as President Obama and his administration lead us in the war against terrorism.

There will be a number of speakers who will share their views with us about these subjects. Students will be expected to read many current articles which, in addition to our texts, will provide the basis of our class discussions. Students will be expected to do a group presentation on a major conflict in today's world. Specific guidance will be given for these presentations later in the course.

None of us have the answers to these troubling global conflicts and yet, I believe we all have strong opinions and will be able to learn from each other in honest and frank discussions with each other and our speakers. It will be crucial for us to develop a knowledge base of theory that can guide our opinions so that they will have some credibility and will not just be our feelings which we express while standing on a soap box. There are no right or wrong answers to these difficult dilemmas and as your instructor, although I may passionately disagree with a position expressed in class, we will provide a safe environment for these dynamic discussions.

Course Materials

Gopin, M. *Healing The Heart of Conflict 8 Crucial Steps to Making Peace With Yourself and Others*

Lederach, J.P. *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*

Rusesabagina, Paul, *An Ordinary Man*

**Handouts will be given for certain sessions...**

*“To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.”***

#### Assignments and Evaluation:

Short Term Essay#1 (3-5 pages) 10% Due on Oct.4 (this paper can be redone if a student wishes to improve his/her grade)

Short Term Essay#2(3-5 pages) 20% Due on Nov.8 Classroom Participation (will be measured by in class assignments to be given by discretion of instructor and by involvement in class discussions) 10%

Group Assignment (Details will be discussed early in the semester) 30%  
These will be on Nov.8, 15,22

Final Assignment (8-10 pages) 30% Due at the time of the Final Exam and is in lieu of a Final Exam

#### **Outline of Classes**

##### **August 30-Introduction to Conflict Resolution and Introductions:**

**Michael English will be speaking about the role of institutions in peace building, will share real life scenarios from the work of his colleagues at the USIP, and will talk about the discussion about the Armenian genocide.**

**Sept. 6, No Class Due to Labor Day**

**Sept. 13-Overview to Contemporary Conflict and A Conceptual Framework for Building Peace, Lederach, Chs. 1-3; Gopin, Chs. 1-3**

**Sept.20, 27 Hotel Rwanda and Discussion, An Ordinary Man**

**Oct.4 And So It Goes...Lederach, Chs. 4-6; Gopin, Chs. 4-6 FIRST ASSIGNMENT DUE**

**Oct. 12, (note the change of date on Oct. 12 due to Columbus Day) The Holocaust: A Study in Values...Could the Holocaust in Europe have been prevented? What Can We Do In Darfur? Handouts Will be Given Out in Class**

**Oct.18, Oct.25, Nov.1 The Conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians: To Dream the Impossible Dream? Lederach, Chs. 7-9; Gopin, Chs.7-8 Handouts will also be distributed. Guest Speaker(s) will be coming in for these sessions**

**Nov.8, 15,22 Class Presentations SECOND ASSIGNMENT DUE ON NOV. 8**

**Nov 29 - How Do We Know if We Were Successful?/ Case in Point Lederach, Chs. 9-10 and Applying Concepts to Cases**

## **Dec.6 Current US Foreign Policy, Guest Speaker -Is There Hope for the Future? Personal Healing, Gopin, Chs.9-11**

**Final Assignment Due on Date scheduled for Final Exam and in lieu of final exam**

### **CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE**

Please come to class on time and prepared. Turn off cell phones, pagers, beepers, etc. Remain in class unless you have an emergency. Allow others and yourself to learn by refraining from by side conversations, passing notes, playing video games, reading e-mail, browsing websites, etc. Be mindful of the sensitivities of others in your comments in class; however, open discussion and dialogue are our goals.

We will be discussing contentious political issues in this course. Students are encouraged to express diverse perspectives. You are likely to encounter strong opinions. You will be expected to keep a balance between arguing your own position on these issues, listening to others, and helping the class to function as collectivity to understand the course content.

### **ACADEMIC POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

#### **Academic Honesty and Collaboration**

George Mason University has an Honor Code with guidelines regarding academic integrity and which is designed, “to promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community” ([www.gmu.edu/catalog/policies](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/policies)). The Honor Code lays out strict penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Plagiarism is a serious offense, and all written work for this course should include proper citations in a standard citation format (MLA, APA, etc.). *If you are unsure about how to cite a direct quotation or concept from course or outside readings, then ask for help.* “I wasn’t sure how to cite a source, so I left out the reference,” is not an acceptable defense for plagiarism. Copies of common style manuals are available at the GMU library reference desk, or online at <http://library.duke.edu/research/citing/workscited/>.

For individual class assignments, you may discuss your ideas with others or ask for feedback; however, you are responsible for making certain that there is no question that the work you hand in is your own. You may not submit papers or presentations from other courses to fulfill assignments for this class.

For group class assignments, the names of all participants should appear on the work. While it’s fine for groups to divide project work among team members, the final product that’s submitted should represent a single, conceptually-linked piece of work. With rare exception, each student working in a group is given the same grade for an assignment. *If a group is having trouble with a member not fulfilling their work obligation, then the group needs to bring the problem to the instructor’s attention immediately*

## **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**

Don't hesitate to contact the office with specific questions about holdings and research regarding the CAR field.

***GOOD LUCK and I hope that each of you will LEARN SOMETHING and MAKE A DIFFERENCE!***