

**Gender and Conflict**  
**CONF 399 007**  
**Spring 2012**  
**Mondays: 4:30-7:10 pm**  
**Innovation Hall 215G**  
**Dr. Ramesh Sepehrrad**  
**School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution**  
**Office Hours: 7:15-8:15 Mondays by appointment only**  
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With outbreaks of conflicts (in various means), it is women who suffer most. They are often subjected to gender-based violence; they become the single heads of households; and they are displaced and forced to travel to camps for refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs). But women are far more than victims: they are often the key to preventing violence from emerging, resolving ongoing conflict, and rebuilding societies once the guns go silent. Conflict studies which emerged after World Wars I and II and, still struggles with fully incorporating lessons learned from gender relations, in particular in post-conflict situations. Understanding how men and women are affected by conflict and assume new roles and responsibilities during and after the conflict is critical for the field. As GenderReach Project by USAID outlines, “Women are especially vulnerable to low-level violence during the early stages of post-conflict transition.”

This course is designed to help students enhance their understanding of the issues and sources of conflicts and gender-based violence in many parts of the world. We will be relying on literature and research from the field of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, International Relations, Women’s Studies, and Anthropology, to examine approaches to gender and conflict on multiple levels (i.e. regional, global and issue based).

Our goals for the course are to:

- Consider the causes, issues and gender relations in conflict within intrastate and interstate context;
- Increase our understanding of the various approaches to analyzing and resolving gender-based violence, incorporate gender-based concerns into analysis and laws, addressing women's rights and security needs in international laws, and issues such as women's roles in peace negotiations.
- Examine particular case studies of international and intrastate gender-conflicts, mapping out the developments and dynamics, understand gender-based indicators, early warnings and examining past and present resolution efforts;

We will contextualize the relation between gender and conflict by:

- Recognizing gendered-based violence
- Evaluating laws and international standards
- Recognizing causes and effects (political, social, economic)
- Examining the issues at inter/intrastate levels in developed, developing and underdeveloped states

- Mapping transnational issues such as religion, ethnic, and cultural roots

## Requirements

**Participation:** You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings. Each class has assigned readings (see schedule below). Because your participation in class activities and discussions is important, your attendance in class is crucial. Participation is graded on more than just attendance! ***Class participation will be worth 15% of your final grade.*** You are expected to be fully prepared and bring the readings to class. In each class, you will be asked to share your *Personal Monitoring* updates which is based on weekly Google News search on Gender and Conflict (+ region, issue, country, etc). This will be used for class exercise toward the end of the semester.

## *Paper and Class Presentations*

### **Gender Interviews and Paper: 25% of your final grade**

Choose two people in your life who belong to different generations and interview them on their thoughts on gender violence, privilege and opportunities for change. Capture their personal experience and also reflect on changes in society related to gender that have happened in the past several years. Summarize the interviews and write a reflective piece addressing generational differences or similarities, surprise, insights, connections between their perspectives, your questions and experiences shared with you.

- Selection of prospects for interviews due: February 6, 2012
- Questions for Interviews due: February 27, 2012
- Paper (no less than 10 pages) due following week: March 5, 2012

[Format: 12 font size, double spaced in Chicago Style. For quick reference on Chicago Style see: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)]

### **Class Presentations: 20% of your final grade**

Choose a novel, 1-2 short stories or a feature film related to gender and conflict, and present your choice(s) to the class, covering:

- Summary of themes and storyline
- Analysis of gendered aspects of story including references to conflict and gender readings
- Questions for discussion
- Due: per assigned week starting

**Exams:** There will be two exams: Midterm and Final. These exams will be open book and conducted during class session as indicated in the weekly schedule outline below. ***Each exam is worth 20% of your final grade.***

## Required Text and Readings

Contemporary Conflict Resolution. 2nd Edition. (2007), Miall, Ramsbotham, et al.

Gender, Conflict, and Development (2004), Tsjeard Bouta, Georg Frerks, and Ian Bannon

**Relevant sites:**

*NGO:* Gender and Conflict:

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/key-issues/gender-and-conflict.aspx>

*Global call:* The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

<http://www.unwomen.org/>

*International Organization:* The World Bank on Gender and Development:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTGENDER/0,,contentMDK:20253062~menuPK:521303~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:336868,00.html>

**Classroom Etiquette, Honor Code, Plagiarism, Syllabus Changes, Absenteeism**

Come to class on time and prepared. Turn off cell phones, handheld devices, etc. Do not leave the room during class unless you have an emergency. Do not disturb others by talking, passing notes, playing video games, surfing the web, etc. Computers are to be used for note taking only – if you are caught using the computer for other ends you forfeit the right to use a computer in class. Always be considerate, respectful and mindful of the sensitivities of others in your comments in class; however, open discussion and dialogue are encouraged.

"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](http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu). All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review. With specific regards to plagiarism, 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. If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor.

S-CAR requires that all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. S-CAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it."

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 me immediately and/or refer directly to the honor code, which can be found at:

<http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=410#Honor> .

Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citation, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writer or which the writer did not discover him/herself. As a general rule, it is always important to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being “reader friendly.” In other words, writers should provide citations for all pieces of information that they think their readers may find new or interesting. Not only is this approach considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism.

It is my intention to create a learning environment which is the best possible experience for students. In this spirit, I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, course structure and readings, as best suits the dynamic of the class. Faculty members are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the learning and testing process. Suspected violations of the Mason Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee in a timely manner using forms provided by the Committee. <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>  
The Honor Committee will promptly notify the involved student(s) in writing.

Absenteeism/tardiness seriously affects your learning experience, as well as your participation grade. If you find that your personal circumstances prevent you from attending class regularly and on time, please discuss your situation with me.

## **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 CAR library liaison is Melissa Johnson (703.993.2212). Do not hesitate to contact her with specific questions about holdings and research in these areas or whom to contact for materials still in the Fenwick Library on the Fairfax Campus

### **Weekly Schedule/Readings**

*(Subject to change)*

#### **Week One (1/23): Introduction**

Organization of the course, assignments, expectations, and getting to know your classmates.

Review definition of Gender, Definition of Conflict.

<http://www.who.int/gender/whatisgender/en/>

Good Source: <http://genderandsecurity.umb.edu/Gender%20and%20Conflict-Skjelsbaek.pdf>

#### **Week Two (1/30): - Recognizing gendered-based violence**

Class Exercise on “What is Gender-based violence?”

Electronic copy available at:

[http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/svaw/advocacy/modelsessions/what\\_is\\_GBV.PDF](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/svaw/advocacy/modelsessions/what_is_GBV.PDF)

Anita Taylor and Judi Miller, “The Necessity of Seeing Gender in Conflict” pp 1-17 (*Electronic Handout*)

#### **Week Three (2/6): - Laws and international standards**

Catharine A. MacKinnon. "Women's September 11th: Rethinking the International Law of Conflict," 47 Harv. Int'l L. J. 1 (2006): Electronic copy available at

[www.harvardilj.org/attach.php?id=70](http://www.harvardilj.org/attach.php?id=70)

Review of CEDAW <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm>

CEDAW ratification by state:

[http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg\\_no=IV-8-b&chapter=4&lang=en](http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8-b&chapter=4&lang=en)

Review of Beijing Platform of Action: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>

#### **Week Four (2/13): - Recognizing causes and effects (political, social, and economic)**

Susanne Schmeidl and Eugenia Piza-Lopez “Gender and Conflict Early Warning: A Framework for Action” available for download in PDF Format on, pp 1-50: Electronic copy available at

<http://portals.wi.wur.nl/files/docs/ppme/getdata4.pdf>

Ch. 6, Bouta et al, Gender, Conflict, and Development

Lessons Learned; Intrastate Conflict And Gender, Office of Women in Development, U.S. Agency for International Development (December 2000) (*Electronic Handout*)

**Week Five (2/20): Inter-Intrastate gender-based conflict**

Ch. 1, Bouta et al, Gender, Conflict, and Development

Ch. 7, Bouta et al, Gender, Conflict, and Development

**Movie:** Gendered Citizens: Human Rights and Violence in the Pacific and Asia  
(Covering case studies from developed, developing and underdeveloped countries)

**Week Six (2/27): Women and Conflict**

Miall, et al., Chapter 12: Gender in Conflict Resolution, pp. 265-274; Chapter 13: Ethics of Intervention, pp. 275-287.

Ch. 2, Bouta et al, Gender, Conflict, and Development

**Week Seven (3/5): Human Rights and Gender**

**Movie:** Conflict Gender and Human Rights – lessons learned from the field. (2004)  
*Paper on Gender Interviews is due (no less than 10 pages)*

Ch. 3, Bouta et al, Gender, Conflict, and Development

**Week Eight (3/12): Enjoy Your Spring Break – No Class**

**Week Nine (3/19): Mid Term Exam – open book**

**Week Ten (3/26) Case Study on Religious-based conflict targeting women**

Movie: Gender Role after the Iranian Revolution  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnSy1JICYtU>

Maryam Rajavi: “Misogyny: pillar of religious fascism” (2003). pp 1-32  
Electronic copy available at: <http://www.free-woman.org/#1>

*Two Class presentations*

**Week Eleven (4/2) Case Study in Cultural-based conflict targeting women**

Movie: Female Genital Cutting in Northern Sudan  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0KAxI8PhTc>

Gabriel Hallevy, “Culture Crimes Against Women” (2010). pp 1-48  
Electronic copy available at: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1564098>

*Two Class presentations*

**Week Twelve (4/9) Case Study in Ethnic-based conflict targeting women**

Amnesty International Report: The failure to protect Indigenous women from sexual violence in the USA (2007). pp 1-112

Electronic copy available at: <http://www.amnestyusa.org/pdfs/MazeOfInjustice.pdf>

*Two Class presentations*

**Week Thirteen (4/16) Women and Peace**

Ch. 4, Bouta et al, Gender, Conflict, and Development

Ch. 5, Bouta et al, Gender, Conflict, and Development

*Two Class presentations*

**Week Fourteen (4/23): Mapping Global Conflicts**

*Class exercise:* Mapping Gender Conflict Globally – handout to be provided in the previous class. This will be based on weekly new monitoring of your topic.

*Two Class presentations*

**Week Fifteen (4/30): Women, Leadership and Power**

Women Pursuing Leadership and Power: Challenging the Myth of the “Opt Out Revolution” (2005)

Electronic copy can be found: [http://www.simmons.edu/som/docs/insights\\_20.pdf](http://www.simmons.edu/som/docs/insights_20.pdf)

Global Leadership: Women Leaders from JSTOR Database: <http://www.jstor.org/pss/40228426>

*Two Class presentations*

**Week Sixteen (5/7): Final Exam– open book**