

CONF 101
CONFLICT AND OUR WORLD

Semester:	Fall 2011
Class Time:	Thursday 10:30am – 1:15pm
Location:	Robinson A 243
Instructor:	Dr. Andrea Bartoli
Office Hour:	S-CAR in Arlington 7 th Floor, Room 703 c <u>By appointment</u> +1 (571) 294 0257; abartoli@gmu.edu
Assistant:	TBC

Welcome to CONF 101 and to the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution. This course provides you with a brief history of field, survey of key conflict resolution themes and theories, and intervention methods. It includes an overview of the general factors of conflict and its resolution as well as the nature of conflict in interpersonal, group, organizational, and international situations. As the first and the introductory course, it is deliberately broad. You will discover many challenges and questions of the field. CONF 101 is only the beginning of your academic endeavor to find your own answers. Other courses at S-CAR develop one or another of the themes covered in this introduction in greater depth.

In CONF 101, you will examine definitions of conflict and diverse views of and approaches to its resolution. You will explore thinking about human behavior and social systems as they relate to the origins of conflict and the role of conflict in violent and peaceful social change. You will be asked to think systematically and analytically about conflict. This course will be run as a seminar with an emphasis on discussion and student participation. It is therefore crucial that students read the assigned books and articles prior to class. Active participation in class discussions will be expected.

Course Requirements:

In addition to regular attendance and participation, 1) a short written comment before each session with particular emphasis on one of the readings (you can chose any of the readings to comment on according to your interests and inclinations 2) 1st short mid-term take-home exam, 3) a group presentation of a case study, and 4) a final take-home exam are required

- 1) Short Written Comment on Readings (10%): You will write short comments, thoughts, reflections, questions, etc, on a Google document to be shared with instructor (andreabartolidc@gmail.com) before coming to class. These comments need not be a comprehensive coverage of the entire readings for the class, nor should they be summaries of the readings. Rather, this is an exercise to elicit your critical reactions to the readings. The comments therefore should reflect your intellectual engagement

with the questions, theories, or cases provided by the readings. You can focus on particular themes. The collection of these exercises will account for 10 percent of the final grade.

- 2) The first take-home exam (25%): This exam will be handed out in class and will be due at the beginning of the following class. A 7-10 page essay (double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 1'-margin) will ask you to choose one of the essay questions and reflect critically on the themes covered by the prior sessions. All submissions should be made both in paper to the instructor and by email at abartoli@gmu.edu
- 3) The group presentation (25%) are based on the same case study. Students will select one of three cases to analyze. A basic book that provides background to the case is designated below and should be sufficient to provide the details of the case. The object of this analytical presentation is to reflect on how one understands the tools of conflict analysis covered in the class. The assigned book and/or an article or two will be sufficient to provide the narrative of the case because the focus of the essay should be to demonstrate one's ability to apply concepts of conflict analysis, rather than an in-depth knowledge of a particular conflict.

Students will select and/or be assigned (in order to achieve rough balance in group size) to one case. The cases list will include:

South Africa:

Patti Waldmeir, *Anatomy of a Miracle: The End of Apartheid and the Birth of the New South Africa* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1997).

Copper Strike:

Jonathan D. Rosenblum, *Copper Crucible: How the Arizona Miners? Strike of 1983 Recast Labor Management Relations in America* 2nd ed. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998).

1968 Washington Riots:

Ben W. Gilbert, *Ten Blocks from the White House: Anatomy of the Washington Riots of 1968* (New York: Praeger, 1968).

Students will have an opportunity at the beginning of the course to suggest and select –as a group- a new case. They will negotiate with the instructor the extra research work that will be needed for a successful competition of all tasks related to this assignment.

- 4) The students in each case study group will be asked to meet (time will be provided during class hours but additional meetings or coordination by email, phone, or other means may be necessary as well). The group will develop a plan to present its understanding of the case. This may represent a consensus among the group or alternative perspectives may be present. The group presentations (during Sessions 11 and 12) will be equally divided (time will be strictly enforced), followed by a general discussion in the class. All submission should be made both in paper to the instructor and by email at abartoli@gmu.edu
- 5) The final examination (40%) will cover materials from throughout the class. A 12-15 page essay (double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 1'-margin) will ask you to reflect critically on the themes, theories, or cases covered by the class, utilizing the theories of conflict analysis and resolution. This exam will be handed out at the end of Session 12 and will be due the following week at the end of class. All submission should be made both in paper to the instructor and by email at abartoli@gmu.edu

Delays, deferrals, or a grade of "incomplete" for the course will be given only in cases of personal or immediate family crisis. Late papers will receive penalized points. Students should also read the statement of S-CAR's Academic Standards and the University's Honor Code.

"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. 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."

Readings:

The following books will be available for purchase at the Bookstore. All other readings are on reserve in the Library, available through the library's electronic journals, or can be found online.

Required:

Dean G. Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim, *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement* 3rd ed. (McGrawHill, 2004).

Kriesberg, Louis. 1998. *Constructive conflicts: from escalation to resolution*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Course Schedule:

Session 1: (Thursday, September 1): Introduction to conflict, its resolution and the study of it

No readings are required for this unit

Session 2: (Thursday, September 8): Where does conflict come from?

Dean G. Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim, *Social Conflict* Ch. 1-3

Kriesberg, Louis. 1998. *Constructive conflicts* Ch 1-3

Session 3: (Thursday, September 15): How does conflict escalate?

Dean G. Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim, *Social Conflict* Ch. 4-8

Kriesberg, Louis. 1998. *Constructive conflicts* Ch. 6

Session 4: (Thursday, September 22): Who are the parties in conflict?

Kriesberg, Louis. 1998. *Constructive conflicts* Ch 4

Session 5 (Thursday, September 29): Who is involved in a conflict?

Kriesberg, Louis. 1998. *Constructive conflicts* Ch 5

Session 6 (Thursday, October 6): Can conflict ever be resolved?

Dean G. Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim, *Social Conflict* Ch. 9-11

Kriesberg, Louis. 1998. *Constructive conflicts* Ch. 7

Session 7 (Thursday, October 13): Is it possible to learn from conflict?

Kriesberg, Louis. 1998. Constructive conflicts Ch 8-9

Session 8 (Thursday, October 20): Key issues: conflict and peace

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

Session 9 (Thursday, October 27): Key issues: conflict and justice

Curle, Adam 1995. Another Way: Positive response to contemporary violence. Oxford: J. Carpenter.

Session 10 (Thursday, November, 3): Key issues: conflict and human needs

Burton, John "Conflict Resolution as a Political Philosophy" George Mason University, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, [1988]: 55-64.

Session 11 (Thursday, November, 10): Case Study Group Presentations

Session 12 (Thursday, November, 17): Case Study Group Presentations

Session 13 (Thursday, December 1): Summation