

George Mason University
School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution
Intensive Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution

CONF 502 Section 001 Fall 2015

Class Time: 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday, August 29
Saturday, September 12 Saturday, October 3
Saturday, September 19 Saturday, October 10
Saturday, September 26

Location: ARLFH 468
Online: <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>

Instructor: David J. Smith, JD, MS
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Office hours: By appointment, and one hour before class

Course Description and Objectives

Welcome to the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution and the course, an introduction to the field of conflict analysis and resolution. Our focus is the study of human social conflict, including the practices and strategies for responding to conflict and frameworks for understanding and explaining conflict dynamics. It is designed to introduce you to the history and current developments in conflict resolution and to help you to think systematically and analytically about conflicts and conflict interventions.

This course will be run as a learning community—discussions, written assignments and in-class activities will facilitate the exchange of thinking and experience. *Please read the assigned books and articles prior to class. Active participation is expected, both in-class and online.* The compressed course format means that the online component is a key element of your course learning and experience. Participants will work together in small groups and individually to analyze and suggest responses to specific cases of small group, community, inter-group or international conflict.

The six Saturdays will address the following objectives:

- ◆ Class participants will learn and be asked to critically examine the worldviews, values, and assumptions underlying the conceptual frameworks people use when analyzing and responding to conflict.
- ◆ Conflict resolution practices reflect the assumptions used to understand conflict and conflict behavior. Class participants will study the relationship between analyzing conflict and attempting to resolve it.

- ◆ Students will become more proficient in identifying conflict dynamics that are both specific to context and type of conflict and those that are more generally identified as elements of conflict.

Course Expectations

Consistent attendance. Barring exceptional circumstances, you are expected to attend all Saturdays for the full time scheduled.

Effective preparation. The quality of class discussions and activities depends on your preparation.

Active participation. Engage actively in the course in whichever of the formats you are most comfortable with: large group discussions, small group work, class exercises, etc.

Course completion. In keeping with departmental policy, incomplete grades will be given only in cases of personal or immediate family illness.

Course Requirements

1. *Participation, short in-class exercises and online discussions.* **20 percent**
In addition to in-class exercises and participation, there will be several discussion topics and short exercises posted to the course online discussion board. Your postings or responses are due by the due date specified. These short assignments should not take more than a half hour and are opportunities for you to reflect on course concepts between classes. These are graded only as completed or not and contribute to your participation grade. I hope you will also enjoy reading the insights of your colleagues and the developing discussions.
2. *Short essay assignment* **20 percent**
In place of a midterm, you will have a short essay assignment, handed out in class and due by the date specified. Your answers to the short questions should be typed and returned via email. **Due: Sunday, September 20** (by 11:59 p.m. via email)
3. *Group project—in-depth study of conflict resolution intervention* **25 percent**
Groups of students will be formed during the first class and will work throughout the course to examine a particular form of conflict intervention (chosen in consultation with the course instructor.) The groups will work together to apply the concepts, theories, and ideas presented in the course to analyze the underlying assumptions, appropriate applications and distinguishing features of your area of study. Your project should include an example of your intervention type applied to a conflict. There will be some time for groups to meet during class time, but outside meetings will also be necessary. Each group will give a 30-minute presentation to the class with supporting materials made available online. **Due: Saturday, October 10** (in class)
4. *Individual analysis/assessment of a conflict* **35 percent**
In consultation with the instructor you will choose a conflict for an analytical conflict assessment and recommendations for next steps. The paper should be 12-15 pages and is a synthesis and application of the conflict concepts covered in the course. The topics will be agreed upon by September 26. **Due: Wednesday, October 21** (11:59 p.m. via email)

Readings

Texts

The required texts are available at the GMU Arlington Bookstore or from online booksellers. Besides the texts, readings will be found on Blackboard (Bb).

Hizkias Assefa and Paul Wahrhaftig, *The MOVE Crisis in Philadelphia: Extremist Groups and Conflict Resolution* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990).

Sandra Cheldelin, Daniel Druckman, and Larissa Fast, eds., *Conflict, 2nd Edition* (New York: Continuum, 2008)

Morton Deutsch, Peter T. Coleman and Eric C. Marcus, eds. *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice, 3rd Edition* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2014).

John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1997)

Dan Snodderling, ed., *Peace Terms* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2011) (<http://glossary.usip.org>)

Other readings

You will be directed to additional assigned readings and resources online. See daily agendas for specific readings. Many of these readings are PDF files and can be read using an Adobe reader, available for download on the library webpage or the course homepage. Please let me know if you need assistance with this technology.

Library Research Orientation

A library research orientation will be scheduled for the class. An overview of current research resources and support will be provided, as well as hands-on assistance with initial searches on your topics of choice.

Class Agenda

WEEKEND ONE (SATURDAY), AUGUST 29

Introduction

Frameworks for Analysis

Form Groups for Intervention Study

Applied Dimensions

Reading for Class:

Burton, Conflict Resolution as a Political Philosophy (Bb and via email)

Dugan, A Nested Theory of Conflict (Bb and via email)

Burgess & Burgess, Intractability and the Frontier of the Field (Bb and via email)

Conflict Styles Assessment (www.buildingpeace.org/act-build-peace/learn/conflict-styles)

(go to 'start' button)

Jones & Brinkert, Conflict Coaching, chapter 9 (part) (via email)

USIP Online Conflict Analysis course (www.usip.org/education-training/courses/certificate-course-in-conflict-analysis)
(due Saturday, September 12)

WEEKEND TWO (SATURDAY), SEPTEMBER 12

**Analyzing Community Conflict
Conflict Behavior and Responses to Conflict
Applied Dimensions**

Reading for Class:

Deutsch, Coleman & Marcus, Introduction and Chapter 2
Assefa & Wahrhaftig, all
Mitchell, How much do I need to know? (Bb)
Cheldelin et al., Part I (all); Part III, chapters , 6 -7, 14-18
Zumeta, Styles of Mediation, (<http://www.mediate.com/articles/zumeta.cfm>)

WEEKEND THREE (SATURDAY), SEPTEMBER 19

**Conflict Dynamics
Conflict Contexts
Applied Dimensions**

Reading for Class:

Deutsch, Coleman & Marcus, Chapters 1, 5, 6, 25, 29
Erickson, Ethnic Identity (Bb)
Gross Stein, Image, Identity, and Conflict Resolution (Bb)
Cheldelin et al., Part II, chapters 8- 11

WEEKEND FOUR (SATURDAY), SEPTEMBER 26

**Conflict Contexts
Conflict De-escalation and Re-building Relationships
Applied Dimensions**

Reading for Class:

Deutsch, Coleman & Marcus, Chapters 2 and 22
Laue & Cormick, Ethics of Community Intervention (Bb)
Cheldelin, et al. part III

WEEKEND FOUR (SATURDAY), OCTOBER 3

**Connecting Analysis to Intervention
Issues in Conflict Resolution Practice
Applied Dimensions**

Reading for Class:

Lederach, Chapter 3-7
Saunders, Prenegotiation and Circumnegotiation (Bb)
Schoeny & Warfield, "Reconnecting systems maintenance to social justice" (Bb)
Cheldelin et al, Part IV
Adler, "The End of Mediation," (www.mediate.com/articles/adlerTheEnd.cfm)

WEEKEND FIVE (SATURDAY), OCTOBER 10

Group Presentations on Interventions
Summary and Integration
Evaluating Your Graduate Experience
Mapping the Field
Career Planning in the Field
Course Evaluations

Reading for Class:

Carstarphen, et al., "Graduate Education and Professional Practice in International Peace and Conflict," USIP Special Report 246, August 2010
(www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr246.pdf)
Mayer, Conflict Resolution: A Field in Crisis (Bb)
Appropriate reading for group projects. See Cheldelin and Deutsch class texts.

University Resources and Assistance

- If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact 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/>
- 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.
- Academic integrity:

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.

List of Supplemental Readings (not including web linked articles)

John W. Burton, "Conflict Resolution as a Political Philosophy," in Dennis J.D. Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe, eds., *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1993).

Guy & Heidi Burgess, "Intractability and the Frontier of the Field." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, Vol. 24, no: 2, Winter 2006.

Cynthia F. Cohen, Stanley J. Birkin, Murray E. Cohen, Monica J. Garfield and Harold W. Webb. "Managing Conflict During an Organizational Acquisition." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, Vol. 23, no. 3. Spring 2006.

Gerald Cormick & James Laue, "The Ethics of Intervention in Community Disputes." in G. Bermant, H. C. Kelman & D. Warwick, eds., *The Ethics of Social Intervention*. (Washington, DC, Halstead Press, 1978)

Maire Dugan, "A Nested Theory of Conflict." *A Leadership Journal: Women in Leadership*. V.1 1996. pp. 9-19.

Thomas Hylland Erickson, "Ethnic Identity, National Identity, and Intergroup Conflict: The Significance of Personal Experiences" in Ashmore, Jussim & Wilder, eds. *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Reduction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 42-68.

Tricia A. Jones and Ross Brinkert, *Conflict Coaching: Conflict Management Strategies and Skills for the Individual* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2008).

Bernard S. Mayer, "Conflict Resolution: A Field in Crisis." *Beyond Neutrality* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004)

C.R. Mitchell, "How Much Do I Need to Know?" in John Paul Lederach & Janice Moomaw Jenner, eds. *A Handbook of International Peacebuilding: Into the Eye of the Storm*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002).

Harold Saunders, "Prenegotiation and Circumnegotiation: Arenas of the Peace Process,"
Managing Global Chaos. Crocker, Osler, Aall, eds. (Washington, DC: United States
Institute of Peace Press, 1996.) pp. 419-432.

Mara Schoeny & Wallace Warfield, "Reconnecting Systems Maintenance with Social Justice: A
Critical Role for Conflict Resolution." *Negotiation Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 3, July 2000,
pp. 253-268.

Janice Gross Stein, "Image, Identity, and Conflict Resolution," in Crocker, Hampson & Aall,
eds., *Managing Global Chaos*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1997),
pp. 93-111.