Syllabus CONF 706 – Distance Learning Course
Ethics and Conflict
Spring 2017

Instructor:
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Office Hours: by appointment (via telephone or email)

Meeting place: Blackboard
Session schedule: starts on Monday, January 23, 2017

Open to non-major graduate students

Course Description

> Students explore the normative dimensions of analysis and resolution of conflicts. This includes issues regarding what is just and unjust, morally right and wrong, and good and bad from the perspective of the conflict protagonists and their allies. Such issues are relevant to analysis and practice before, during, after conflicts occur. The major topics include the following: validity of pacifism, the notions of a just war, the plight of civilians in war, the challenges of genocide prevention, non-violent resistance, humanitarian interventions, and human rights.

Course Topics

1. What is the nature of right and wrong, good and bad, virtue and vice in the context of violent conflict? For this question, we draw upon the insight of moral philosophers and religious thinkers. This question calls for attention to arguments of pacifists, such as M.L. King and M. Gandhi.
2. What constitutes a just intervention in violent conflict? Just war theory addresses this question by offering normative criteria for a state's rightful use of force in settling disputes with another state. These insights and challenges are applied to a critical reflection on contemporary violence.
3. Can wars be fought justly (or humanely), and if so, how? This question centers on the need to balance two moral imperatives—(a) the obligation [moral, political, legal] of state militaries to protect their own forces during combat, and (b) the moral imperative to act humanely towards the innocents of war—prisoners, children, and the infirmed. And in "post-conflict" settings, we explore what constitutes a just peace.
4. What are the ethics of practice? This question calls for a critical reflection on a basic assumption in our field, that conflict resolution professionals have a moral imperative to change the ways in which the conflict parties behave, think, and possibly express their emotions.

Course Logistics

This course will use a distance learning format. The primary meeting space will be on Blackboard. Other means will be used to promote regular communication, such as email, telephone, and Skype. This is a rigorous course. In addressing one topic per session, you are expected to:

- read about 70-100 pages and discuss the material with your classmates
- accomplish online activities and respond to requirements
- work on assignments to be submitted through Blackboard according to the assignment schedule.

Though the delivery method is different from face-to-face courses, it should take you the same amount to time as a typical graduate course. Because this class is accelerated, you should **expect to spend 8 to 10 hours on coursework each week** (this includes the time you would have spent in a classroom). It is critical to keep up with requirements. I will provide a folder each session in our Blackboard course to specify required activities and assignments (available by clicking on 'Course Contents' on the course menu in Blackboard).

Blackboard

We will use Blackboard for the course. Additional guidance on individual assignments and discussion questions will be posted there. Use the Blackboard assignment drop box to submit your work for grading. Please visit our Blackboard site regularly.

Access Blackboard by following these steps:

1. Go to http://mymason.gmu.edu.

2. Login using your NETID and password,

3. Click on the 'Courses' tab.

4. Click on "CONF-706 Master (Spring 2017)" under the "Blackboard Course" heading.

Instructor-Student Communication

I will respond to your emails within 48 hours. If I am away from email for more than two days, then I will post an announcement in the Blackboard course folder.

Before sending an email, please check the following (available on your Blackboard course menu) **unless the email is of a personal nature**:

1. Syllabus
2. Help forum (Feel free to respond to other students in the Help forum if you know the answer.)
3. Blackboard tutorials on how to use Blackboard features
4. Blackboard Q&A, and

5.   Technology Requirements.

Mason EMAIL

- GMU requires that Mason email be used for all courses. I will be sending messages to your Mason email and you are responsible for making sure you have access to these messages.

- You may forward your Mason email to other accounts but always use your Mason e-mail when communicating with me to allow verification of your identity.

- When you email me, be sure to include **CONF 706** at the beginning of the subject heading to alert me that I have received a message from one of my online students.

Participation

Netiquette For Online Discussions [1]

Respectful communication is important to your success in this course and as a professional. Since we are creating a learning environment and sharing information and learning from one another, our discussion will be collaborative and not combative. Please re-read your responses carefully before you post them, making sure that your messages cannot be miscued as negative or offensive in tone. Be positive to others and diplomatic with your words. In particular, be especially careful when expressing sarcasm or humor. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be easily misconstrued.

[1] Netiquette prepared by Charlene Douglas, Associate Professor, College of Health & Human Services, GMU.

Technology Requirements for this Course

Hardware:

You will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer with at least 2 GB of RAM and to a fast and reliable broadband Internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A larger screen is recommended for better visibility of course material. You will need speakers or headphones to hear recorded content and a headset with a microphone is recommended for the best experience. For the amount of Hard Disk Space required to take a distance education course consider and allow for:

1. The storage amount needed to install any additional software and

2. Space to store work that you will do for the course.

Software:

You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the myMason Portal. See supported browsers and operating systems. Log in to myMason to access your registered courses. Some courses may use other learning management systems. Check the syllabus or contact the instructor for details. Online courses typically use Acrobat Reader, Flash, Java (Windows), and Windows Media Player, QuickTime and/or Real Media Player. Your computer should be capable of running current versions of those applications. Also, make sure your computer is protected from viruses by downloading the latest version of Symantec Endpoint Protection/Anti-Virus software for free at http://antivirus.gmu.edu.

Students owning Macs or Linux should be aware that some courses may use software that only runs on Windows. You can set up a Mac computer with Boot Camp or virtualization software so Windows will also run on it. Watch http://support.apple.com/kb/VI54?viewlocale=en_US about using Windows on a Mac. Computers running Linux can also be configured with virtualization software or configured to dual boot with Windows.

Note: If you are using an employer-provided computer or corporate office for class attendance, please verify with your systems administrators that you will be able to install the necessary applications and that system or corporate firewalls do not block access to any sites or media types.

Hardware or software required for this course or program may be available for purchase at Patriot Computers (the University's computer store that offers educational discounts and special deals).

Required Readings
   Books
   1. Richard J. Regan, Just War: Principles and Cases. Second Edition. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of American Press. ISBN 978-0-8132-2019-2 [Paperback] (rent or buy)

   2. D. Rothbart, K. Korostelina, and M. Cherkaoui, eds., (co-edited)*,* Civilians and Modern War: Armed Conflict and the Ideology of Violence*,* 2012, Routledge Press. Ebook available through the University Library. [Electronic Resource] http://mutex.gmu.edu/login?url=http://w`ww.gmu.eblib.com/EBLWeb/patron/?target=patron&extendedid=P_956897_0

   3. D. Rothbart and K. Korostelina, Why They Die: Civilian Devastation in Violent Conflict, 2011, Routledge Press. Ebook available through University library. http://magik.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=2934723 [Electronic Resource]

   4. Martin Buber, I and Thou, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958, [Paperback] (rent or buy)

*Articles***:** All articles are provided in course content for the particular session in which they are assigned.

Course Overview

It is important to complete all work on schedule, but if there are extenuating circumstances; such as sickness, family issues, or religious observances that conflict with our schedule, please let me know as soon as possible—I will try to accommodate your needs.

Major Assignments

Assignment	Points	Due Date
Exam #1	25	due February 27
Exam #2	25	due April 3
Exam #3 [cumulative]	25	due May 9
Participation (includes blog, and discussions, syllabus quiz)	25	Ongoing
Total	100	

Grading Scale (points)

A 100-93

A- 92-90

B+ 89-87

B 86-83

B- 82-80

C 79-70

F < 70

Description of Assignments

Participation

Active participation in discussions is expected most sessions. Accomplish all activities, and interact with classmates each session. Discussion prompts are given for five session periods throughout the course. For these discussions each student is already preassigned to a group: Group 1 or Group 2. To access the discussion prompts and to provide your entries, go to "My Groups" on the left column and click your group, which is either group 1 or Group 2. Find the prompt and then post your answer to the prompt question by the designated due date. You should also reply freely to the other posts of students in your group. Please refer to the "Rubric for Discussions" in Blackboard for specific grading criteria.

Netiquette For Online Discussions [1]

Our discussion should be collaborative, not combative; you are creating a learning environment, sharing information and learning from one another. Respectful communication is important to your success in this course and as a professional. Please re-read your responses carefully before you post them so others will not to take them out of context or as personal attacks. Be positive to others and diplomatic with your words and I will try my best to do the same. Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be easily misconstrued.

[1] Netiquette prepared by Charlene Douglas, Associate Professor, College of Health & Human Services, GMU.

Exam #1
Questions for exam #1 will be available Week 5, Monday February 20 and due Monday February 27. Please submit this to me via my email address. The entire completed exam should be 4-6 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman with 12 pt font, and 1 inch margins and written in a Word document. Please add a title page and reference page if sources outside of class readings are used. For class readings, in-text citations are sufficient. Please refer to the "Rubric for Exams" for specific grading criteria. (Click on "Rubrics" in the Course menu to view.) This exam is worth 25 % of the course grade.

Exam #2
Questions for exam #2 will be available Week 9, Monday, March 27 and is due Monday April 2. Send your answers to me via my email address. The entire completed exam should be 4-6 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman with 12 pt font, and 1 inch margins and written in a Word document. Please add a title page and reference page if sources outside of class readings are used. For class readings, in-text citations are sufficient. Please refer to the "Rubric for Exams" for specific grading criteria. (Click on "Rubrics" in the Course menu to view.)

Exam #3
Questions for this exam will be available on Week 13, April 24 and Due May 9. The entire completed exam should be 4-6 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman with 12 pt font, and 1 inch margins and written in a Word document. Please add a title page and reference page if sources outside of class readings are used. For class readings, in-text citations are sufficient. Please refer to the "Rubric for Exams" for specific grading criteria. (Click on "Rubrics" in the Course menu to view.)

Course Schedule of Activities

Week 1: January 23-29: Introduction

    Content:
- Mini-Lecture: Welcome
- Mini-lecture: Introduction

    Activities:
        Introduce yourself. Post due January 26

Week 2: January 30–February 5: Nonviolence, Pacifism, and Justice

- Required Reading

    1. Martin Luther King, "Non-Violence"

    2. Mahatma Gandhi, "Writings on Non-Violence"

    3. Gene Sharp, "The techniques of Nonviolence"

- Lecture: Non-Violence, Pacifism, and Justice
- Videos

1. Dr. King: Nonviolence is the Most Powerful Weapon http://youtu.be/74XJJ3Tq5ew (MLK speaks about Gandhi)
2. Excerpts from Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence Speech
   Martin Luther King, Jr - His Best Speech (1/2) http://youtu.be/wXNN2WlN0No
3. Clip from Gandhi movie (1982) -- Gandhi's speech on non-violence
   http://youtu.be/Xllnvm5-snk

Discussion Prompt:

One form of racial injustice that M.L. King experienced first-hand in the Jim Crow South was the segregation of "colored" and "whites" in the water fountains, bathrooms, and public swimming pools. Why exactly are such policies unethical, according to King?

Provide an answer in 100-200 words. Post due February 2

Week 3: February 6-12: Justifying Humanitarian Intervention

- Required Reading
1. Regan, "The Just War Decision: Just Cause and Interventionist Wars," Just War, Chapter 4 (book)

2. Madeleine K. Albright and Richard S. Williamson, "The United States and R2P: From Words to Action"

3. Hugo Slim, "Claiming a Humanitarian Imperative" in Human Rights and Conflict, chapter 6, pp. 159-174
- Lecture: Justifying War

- Video: David Rieff, with Gareth Evans http://youtu.be/bMDu6jjf-sY 00:00-20:00

Discussion Prompt:

According to traditional just war theory, the only justification for a sovereign nation to engage militarily with another sovereign state is self-defense from enemy aggression. Is there a current war in which a sovereign state is justly engaged in military intervention against an enemy aggressor?

 Provide an answer in 100-200 words. Post due February 9

Week 4: February 13-19: Human Rights

- Required Reading

  1. Andrea Bartoli and Yanni Psimopoulos, "Conflict Resolution and Human Rights" in Handbook of Conflict Resolution, Second Edition, Chapter 27
  2. Kevin Avruch, "Culture, Relativism and Human Rights," in Context and Pretext in Conflict Resolution, Paradigm Press, Chapter 3, pp. 33-50.

- Lecture: Human Rights
- Video: Documentary: *Worse than War*

http://documentaryheaven.com/worse-than-war/

View the following segments: (1:18-2:38 -- Rwandan perpetrator)
(10:15-11:23 -- Rwandan Victim)
(12:08-14:40 -- Rwandan perpetrator)
(26:11-27:32 -- German *S*S)

(42:53-44:50 -- Rwandan perpetrator and survivors)

Week 5: February 20-26: Ethics and Morality

Exam #1 Available February 20.
Mini-lecture on Ethics and Morality
Required Reading

1. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, "What is Morality?"
What is Morality.docx ⩔

2. J. S. Mill, Utilitarianism
http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/11224 [access online]

3. Intrinsic Versus Extrinsic Value
Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Valuex.docx ⩔

Week 6: February 27-March 5: the Moral Quest

- Required Readings

  1. Charles Taylor, <u>Sources of the Self: the Making of the Modern Identity</u>. Harvard UP, pp. 25-52.<u>Taylor, Sources of the Self.pdf</u> ⌄

   2. Martin Buber, <u>I and Thou</u>, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958, Paperback (book)

- Lecture: The Moral Quest

Week 7: March 6-12: Identity and Difference

- Required Reading

1. Celia Cook-Huffman, The Role of Identity in Conflict

<u>Cook-Huffman, The role of identity in conflict.doc</u> ⌄

2. Rothbart and Korostelina, "Moral Denigration of the Other"

<u>Rothbart and Korostelina Moral Denigration.doc</u> ⌄

- Lecture on Identity and Difference
- Video:

Palestinian Suicide Terrorists Farewell Videos (00:34)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytX-DI_jwwI

Discussion Prompt: Describe an incident/event/interaction that you feel comfortable sharing that changed your conception of self in relation to others. How exactly did this change your sense of who you are?

Provide an answer in 100-200 words. Post due Thursday, March 16

Week 8: March 20-26: Civilians in War

- Required Reading:

  1. Regan, "Just War Conduct," <u>Just War</u>, Chapter 6. (book)

  2. Rothbart and Korostelina, <u>Why They Die</u>, Introduction to Part One and Chapter 1. (e-book)

- Lecture on Civilians in War
- Video: "War and Peace, War Redefined" Click on link below to view video:
  http://www.pbs.org/wnet/women-war-and-peace/full-episodes/war-redefined/
- **Discussion Prompt:** The laws of war include principles for the just conduct of war, jus in bello. Which principle of jus in bello is routinely violated by non-state militia forces engaged in combat against state run militaries?

Provide an answer in 100-200 words. **Post: due March 23**

Week 9: March 27-April 2.

Exam #2 Available Monday, March 27 and due Monday April 2.

View "Rubric for Exams" under "Rubrics" on Course menu.

[No other activities for this week.]

Week 10: April 3-9: Genocidal Violence

- Required Reading:

  1. Ervin Staub, "The Origins and Prevention of Genocide, Mass Killing and Other collective Violence"Staub, Origins and Prevention of genocide.pdf

  2. "The Rwanda Conflict" Rwandan Conflict.pdf
- Lecture on Genocidal Violence

Week 11: April 10-16: Truth and Justice
- Required Reading

  1. Priscilla Hayner, Unspeakable Truths, Chapter 2 and 3

  Hayner, Unspeakable Truths.pdf ⌄

  2. Michael Miklaucic, "The Price of Justice," Civilians and Modern War: Armed Conflict and the Ideology of Violence, Chapter 13. (e-book)

- Lecture on Truth and Justice

- Video

  Gacaca Court Testimony of Karegaya Isae
  http://genocidearchiverwanda.org.rw/index.php?title=Kmc00024-sub1-eng-glifos

Week 12: April 17-23

- Required Readings

  1. Herbert Kelman and Donald Warwick, "The Ethics of Social Intervention: Goals, Means, and Consequences"

  Kelman and Warwick, Ethics of Intervention.pdf ⌄

2. Mara Schoeny and Wallace Warfield, "Reconnecting Systems Maintenance with Social Justice"

Schoeny and Warfield, Reconnecting systems Maintenance and social justicepdf.pdf ⌄

- Lecture: Ethics of Intervention
- **Discussion Prompt:**
- Think of an actual conflict for which you are responsible for designing mediation sessions for the parties. What exactly are the ethical dimensions of such sessions? You can refer to the four ways in which ethics is embedded in mediation, as discussed in this session.
- **Provide an answer in 100-200 words. Post April 20.**

Week 13: April 24 – May 1: The Ethics of Intervention

Exam #3 distributed. Due April 24
        [No other activities this week.]

Week 14: May 1-8: Summation

- Complete course evaluation [online]
- Lecture: Summation
- Exam #3: **Due May 8**

Student Responsibilities

Academic Integrity
Students must be responsible for their own work, and students and faculty must take on the responsibility of dealing explicitly with violations. The tenet must be a foundation of our university culture. [See http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/distance].

Honor Code and Virtual Classroom Conduct:
Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (See http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code)

We value critical thinking and therefore, it is imperative that students read the assigned books and articles prior to the class with a critical eye. Active thought, quality of inputs, and a conflict resolution attitude should be your guiding principles.

Work Ethic
CONF 706 is designed as a collaborative learning experience. It is important that students participate in every class and that they contribute actively to groups and class discussions.   Please participate enthusiastically in group activities while respecting the

opinions and valuing the work of other group members. You will be disappointed in this class if you focus on individual effort alone.

However, any individual work should be strictly your own. Presenting another's work as your own (plagiarism) will result in a zero grade for the assignment.

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.**

Student Services

Writing Center:
The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. (See http://writingcenter.gmu.edu). ESL Help: The program was designed specifically for students whose first language is not English who feel they might benefit from additional, targeted support over the course of an entire semester. (See http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/?page_id=10).

University Libraries:
University Libraries provides resources for distance students. (See http://library.gmu.edu/distance).

Counseling and Psychological Services
The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See http://caps.gmu.edu].