

GLOBAL CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION
CONF 340, Section 002 Spring 2015

Class meeting time: Monday-Wednesday, 9:00-10:15 am
Hannover Hall L003
Instructor: Hilmi Ulas
E-mail: hulas@gmu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment only

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to CONF 340! Conflict analysis and resolution, is a multi-disciplinary field, which has grown fairly rapidly since the 1980s. The field offers a wide range of analytical tools and problem-solving mechanisms at various levels including the individual, social, international and global. The purpose of this class is to study the causes and consequences of global conflict and what steps can be taken towards the resolution of such conflicts. Conflict resolution first requires conflict analysis; we must understand the why, when, and how of a particular global conflict system before we can hope to resolve it.

The end of the Cold War has ushered in an era of globalization. This is the emergence of a new environment that has transformed the nature of international economic, political, social and cultural relations. Of particular interest to the course are various types of interstate and intra-state conflicts that are manifestations of the trends in globalization. Changing dynamics in the global security structure include: the vertical and horizontal increases in proliferation of small arms, conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction; the acquisition and dissemination of nuclear technology; the lucrative export of arms; and the ensuing regional and international arms races. These phenomena pose many challenges for the global security environment and are qualitatively different than security concerns during the Cold War era.

The course shall explore conflict theory, identifying the underlying causes and emergence of deep-rooted protracted conflicts. Conflict processes and various types, symptoms and patterns of conflict dynamics and conflict escalation shall be examined. In an effort to understand the dynamic and complex nature of modern conflict systems, we will attend carefully to the inter-connectedness of the causes, conduct, and effects of violent conflict around the world. In addition, various models for intervention including prevention, management, settlement, resolution and transformation shall be discussed.

We shall apply various theoretical insights to conflict hotspots around the world. Class discussions and assignments shall reflect upon the extent to which these theories help us understand conflict, as well as interventions in conflict systems. Student participation in discussions and prior

preparation (as specified below), shall be critical in making the class a successful learning experience.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Familiarize students with conflict theories, terminology and concepts associated with global conflicts;
- Help students think critically, systematically and analytically about intrastate and interstate conflicts in different regions and in a variety of contexts
- Increase understanding of various approaches to analyze/resolve global conflicts in different contexts
- Analyze root causes of intrastate and interstate conflicts, focusing at multiple levels of analysis – individual, state/society, regional and global
- Examine particular international and intrastate conflicts, mapping out their developments and examining past and present resolution efforts

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Please come to class on time and prepared. Turn off cell phones and other electronic devices, except for your note-taking devices. Remain in class unless you have an emergency. The use of laptops in class is discouraged except for taking notes. 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, as well as encouraging, hearing, and respecting other opinions.

If an emergency prevents a student from attending class, the student should let me know ahead of time when possible. Please, contact a classmate to find out what was missed. Students are responsible for all announcements, assignments, and date changes made in class, and for all material covered in class, even if they are not there.

You may contact me by phone or by e-mail at any time. E-mailing is the best way to reach me. I shall respond to your query within 48 hours. Please, remember to always use your GMU email account when communicating with me.

ASSIGNMENTS and EVALUATION

Participation (20%): Classes shall follow a collaborative learning format, thus requiring student participation as an essential ingredient. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss readings. Regular attendance and active participation based on thoughtful reflection of the literature and class discussions are not only highly recommended but also required.

Experiential Learning Activity (20%): in the frames of the course we will conduct an Experiential

Learning Activity on the gas dispute in Eastern Mediterranean. In this roleplay activity, you will simulate a United Nations summit aimed at preventing interstate conflict over vast undersea gas and oil fields recently discovered in the Eastern Mediterranean. This simulation uses a contemporary scenario to enhance your understanding of the complex dynamics of conflict and negotiation at interstate, regional and international levels, and the roles of identity and interests as potential drivers of escalation or resolution. Sound preparation and effective participation are required.

Final Research Paper (30%): You will write a 10 to 15-page research paper on a case study. In this paper, drawing from theories we will learn in our class, you will present and discuss the basic parameters of a contemporary conflict and offer suggestions for resolving the conflict. It is an individually written paper, demonstrating your own reflections on the application of theory to a conflict of your choice. Your paper must aim to do the following:

- Analyze a conflict drawing on one or two theories discussed in class. In our class we will explore a number of analytic frameworks that may help you in this task.
- Recommend a number of potential conflict interventions that may help parties in conflict deal effectively with the issues they face.

Further details on the structure of the final paper, as well as on other specifics will be given later in the semester. Your final research paper will be evaluated on the following basis:

a) Demonstration of knowledge of the given conflict system: Throughout the paper you need to show that you have done a sound research and that you understand the different parameters of the conflict you explore (background, parties, causes, issues, relationships, dynamics etc).

b) Right use of theories and concepts we have learned in class: Your writing needs to reflect a clear understanding of the theories you have chosen to use in your case. In your paper you also need to explain why the theories you use are relevant to the case you explore.

c) Recommendations: Again here the intention is to demonstrate that you have understood the different types of intervention and when each of those types is used (matching the reality on the ground to the right type of intervention). Here, being realistic and exploring ethical concerns is important.

d) Overall organization and clarity: The reader needs to be able to follow easily what is being presented in the paper. Thus, your paper needs to be a cohesive narrative rather than an unstructured body of information. You may have done an excellent job in your research, but throwing information out there without a structure and in a disorganized way does not help the reader understand what you write.

e) Correct and consistent citation style: this is an academic paper and this needs to be reflected in the overall format. If you are not sure about which style to use or if you have questions, you can contact the GMU Writing Center (e-mail wcenter@gmu.edu, or call 703-993-4491).

You are welcome to discuss your ideas with me. A one-page proposal of what you plan to research with a tentative bibliography is due in class by Monday, March 30th. I will return your proposal to you by April 6th with my comments. **The final research paper is due on May 11th**, and you are expected to send it to me electronically. Please, pay attention to grammar, spellings, typographical mistakes and consistency in citations, as it shall have an impact on your grade.

Short Written Comment on Readings (30%): You will write short comments, thoughts, reflections etc., on a dedicated Google document shared with the instructor before coming to class (up to 5 paragraphs). You will be assigned to one of the four groups (which will rotate): a) one group will explore positive points about a theory/theories presented in readings, b) the second group will critique and explore deficiencies of the theory/theories, c) the third group will be expected to reflect on appropriate applications of a certain theory in different conflict situations, and d) the fourth group will 'synthesize' the week's theories with others we have already studied, comparing and contrasting at least two (more is welcome).

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 – i.e. the writings should reflect your group members' reactions to and discussions/debates on the readings.

Each week, one member of your group should act as *the person* who takes notes on your group's ideas and is responsible for submitting the assignment. This position should rotate *each week*.

You will be allotted 15-20 minutes at the end of each week to discuss and reflect as a group. Your subsequent submissions will be due on each Sunday by 11:59 pm on the Google Doc.

Summary:

- Class Participation: 20%
- ELA Participation: 20%
- Final Research Paper: 30%
- Reflection Essays: 10%
- Short Written Comments on Readings: 20%

Grading Scale

98 - 100 A+
93 - 97 A
90 - 92 A-
87 - 89 B +
83 - 86 B
79 - 82 B -
75 - 78 C+
72- 74 C
69- 71 C-
61 - 68 D
0 – 60 F

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Academic Honesty and Collaboration: 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.

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.

Late Work: Class assignments that are submitted late can be penalized by one point for each day they are late (i.e. B instead of B+). Late papers will be accepted only in cases of documented personal illness or family emergency. If this is the case, you must email a copy at my GMU email address per the extension given to you.

Paper Format: Papers for the course should be typed, double-spaced, have 1" margins, and use a common 12-point font. Headers should include only the course number, CONF 340. **Papers should have a title, include your name and the instructor's name.** Sources should be cited using a single standard academic citation format.

STUDENT RESOURCES

English Language Institute

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, visit <http://eli.gmu.edu/>, call 703-993-3642 or e-mail eli@gmu.edu.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center is a free writing resource that offers individual, group, and online tutoring. For general questions and comments, please visit <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>, e-mail wcenter@gmu.edu, or call 703-993-4491.

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. The 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>).

Class Schedule:

January 21: Introduction to Course

January 26 - January 28: Some Prevalent Topics in Our Times

Readings: Autesserre, Chapter 1

Religious Extremism and Colonial History

LeVine, M., 2015, "Why Charlie Hebdo attack is not about Islam", *AlJazeera* [online], available at:

<http://m.aljazeera.com/story/20151106726681265>

Resource-based Conflicts: Water, Fuel

Bryza, M, 2014, "Eastern Mediterranean Natural Gas: Potential for Historic Breakthroughs among Israel, Turkey, and Cyprus" in *Energy in the Eastern Mediterranean: Promise or Peril*, pp. 39-46, [online], available at: <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/ep65.pdf>

International Movements: Student movements, Social Movements, and Political Movements

Read: <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/student-movements-subject-human-geography#axzz3PCj5Vb7d>
and: <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/comic/24>

Peacekeepers – Useful or Harmful?

Skim: http://eeas.europa.eu/ifs/publications/articles/book2/book%20vol2_part2_chapter23_unintended%20consequences%20of%20peacekeeping_cedric%20de%20coning,%20chiyuki%20aoi%20and%20ramesh%20thakur.pdf

February 2 - February 4: Human Nature as a Source

Readings: Waltz, Chapters 2 & 3

Hauss, Chapters 1 & 2

Zartman, Chapter 1

Case Study: The Rwandan Genocide

Read: <http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/genocides-and-conflicts/rwandan-genocide>

Watched in Class: *Triumph of Evil* by PBS

February 9 - February 11: State System as a Source

Readings: Waltz, Chapters 4 & 5

Case Study: The Arab Spring & The Maple Spring

February 16 - February 18: International Anarchy as a Source

Readings: Waltz, Chapters 6, 7, & 8

Case Study: ISIS, Syria, and Iraq

February 23 - February 25: International Negotiations

Readings: Hauss, Chapters 5 & 6

Zartman, Introduction and Chapters 3 & 4

Movie: Fog of War

Case Study: Camp David & USSR - USA

March 2 - March 4: Social-Psychological Dimensions

Readings: Hauss, Chapters 7 & 8

Zartman, Chapter 2 & 10

Case Study: Bahrain

March 16 - March 18: Use of Force

Readings: Hauss, Chapter 9

Zartman, Chapters 7 & 11

Case Study: Libya

Spring Break

March 23 - March 25: International Courts

Readings: Hauss, Chapter 10

Zartman, Chapter 5

Case Study: Uganda and Yugoslavia

March 30 - April 1: Human-Based Approaches

Readings: Zartman, 8 & 9

Fisher [online], available at: http://scar.gmu.edu/op_14_fisher.pdf

Case Study: Cyprus

April 6 - April 8: Lessons from the Field I

Readings: Autesserre, Chapters 2 & 3

April 13 - April 15: Lessons from the Field II

Readings: Autesserre, Chapters 5, 6, & Conclusion

April 20 - April 22: ELA I

April 27 - April 29: ELA II

May 4: Wrap-up (if necessary)

May 11: Final Submission Due Electronically to hulas@gmu.edu