

CONF 642: INTEGRATION
School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution
Spring 2012

Kevin Avruch
Office: Truland 604
Phone: 703-993-3607
Email: kavruch@gmu.edu
Office hours: Monday 6.00-7.15 pm and by appointment
Course time & location: Monday, 7.20-10.00 pm, Truland 333A

Course Goals and Organization

Taken in the last semester of your S-CAR MS. coursework, CONF 642 is designed as a capstone course. While calling the course “Integration” strikes me as aspirational (if not outrightly talismanic), it does aim to provide a more-or-less formal structure around which you (and I emphasize, *you*) can think about the still-emergent field of conflict analysis and resolution (“conflict and peace studies,” increasingly), and reflect critically on what you have learned, what you wish you had learned and what, in either case, remains to be learned. If ever there was a field of study and practice cast in the mode of *becoming* (and not simply *being*), this field surely qualifies.

The course will be divided roughly in three parts. Part One (weeks 1-4) will consist of a review of the field’s development and main conceptual engagements. We will start by creating collectively a list of problems, puzzles, or issues in the field. These can comprise problems (etc.) in theory, research, and practice. We’re especially interested in those problems, issues, etc. that are stubbornly problematic, that is, that invite special critical reflection or remain for us in the field as “unfinished business.” Your first assignment (individually) will be to create map of the field, noting territory both “explored” and “unexplored.” The maps will be presented and shared with the class. They will determine in part the topics we take up in the third part of the course: we will use the maps to form teams that will independently research these topics and present their findings to the class in Part Three (see below).

Because no one instructor can claim to represent with authority all of the field, Part Two (roughly weeks 5-11, broken by midsemester recess), will feature a number of guest lecturers presenting their own experience of the field or (in the case of Julie Shedd and Tammie Howell) helping you to present your S-CAR education (and anything else you brought to S-CAR) in a coherent résumé suitable for job-hunting. (Guests may have a reading or two of their own to assign.) I expect more than passive note-taking, here. You should use this opportunity to explore with the guests their sense of the field, and the path(s) they themselves have taken through it in crafting their own careers.

Part Three (weeks 12-15) will be devoted to taking up some of the areas we identified as “problematic” or “unfinished business” earlier in the course. This will involve seminar-type presentations by student teams (see below).

Course Readings

I’ve assigned three books for the course:

Conflict: from Analysis to Intervention, S. Cheldelin, D. Druckman and L. Fast, eds. Get the second edition.

Conflict Management and Resolution: An Introduction, Howon Jeong

The Moral Imagination, John Paul Lederach

In choosing these books I considered the challenges of seeking to “integrate” our field of study and practice in a single course. Each has its virtue. Cheldelin et al. is sometimes called “the S-CAR [formerly ICAR] textbook.” It strives for comprehensiveness and covers most of the topics we have come to include as part of the field. (It also contains two chapters, as bookends, that strive explicitly and heroically toward integration!) It also has (perhaps a virtue, maybe not) the widest collection in one place of what can be thought of as S-CAR faculty voices, and therefore taken as a whole (but not in one sitting!) offers a sort of S-CAR sensibility as to what (“we think”) comprises the field.

Jeong’s book has the virtue of a single, well modulated voice representing the field in a survey mode. Usefully, it highlights a number of key issues the field has engaged in theory and research (power, identity, structure, etc.), and covers many varieties of conflict settlement and resolution practice. As befitting an introductory text, it also presents the field as more internally consistent – and *completed* – than is perhaps warranted. In any case, between Cheldelin et al., and Jeong, as you leave S-CAR (and assuming you don’t resell them) there will be few stones unturned, or topics unwritten about, in your personal conflict analysis and resolution library.

Lederach’s book is a different matter: a highly personal reflection on a life in the field, particularly as lived by one of our most eminent scholar-practitioners. The authors in Cheldelin et al. strive for analytical objectivity; Jeong (appropriately) for objectivity with authoritative expertise. Lederach is all subjectivity all the way. He is *parti pris*. If you haven’t already read him, you should do so before you leave here. Whatever else we are, ours is a normative discipline. (*Discuss.*)

While I have assigned a few specific readings to specific weeks, note that it will be the responsibility of the student teams, as we move into Part Three of the course, to assign the readings from Cheldelin et al., Lederach, and chapters from Jeong that correspond to their own customized seminar presentations. (For example: if one team is taking on “power in conflict resolution practice” as a topic, they will ensure that the class prepares by reading any and all relevant work as found in the books assigned.) In some cases

groups might feel it necessary to assign relevant or important supplementary readings not from our assigned books; in that case teams must make the readings available to the class (you can send me electronic copies and I'll distribute). *Teams should be prepared to give us their assignment at least a week before their presentation.*

Parents of the Field. There's another resource for this course I'd like to bring to your attention. Chris Mitchell and Jannie Botes have worked for several years on what they call "The Parents of the Field Project." They videotaped interviews with many of the field's founders. Ultimately all will be posted on the S-CAR website. For now, about 10 or so are. I encourage you to visit the site and when you have time to view one or more of the interviews. It will put you viscerally in touch with some of the names you have learned about in the abstract, over the years. You will also discover names you didn't know or learn much about (e.g., Betty Reardon, J. David Singer, Chadwick Alger... shame on us). Consider any one or several of these videos as a "recommended viewing." They appear formally on your syllabus in Week 3. Here's the site:

<http://icar.gmu.edu/parents>

Assignments and Requirements

1. **Map** of the field of conflict analysis and resolution

Due January 30 (10%)

2. **Reflective essay** on your experience (thus far) of the field, and where you hope to go. (What have you learned at S-CAR? Didn't? Wish you had? Will ensure you do now....)

1250-1500 words, due Feb. 20 (15%)

3. A **resume** prepared for review and critique

Due March 5 (non-graded)

4. **Team** seminar presentations for Part Three

Due April 16-23 (collective/team grade, 25%)

5. **Term paper:** Can grow out of your part of the team seminar presentation or you can take on a different topic entirely. You can write on a specific theory (e.g., basic human needs, social identity); theoretician (e.g., Galtung) or practitioner (e.g. Kelman); area of ongoing research (e.g., on violence, gender, diasporas and conflict); practice (e.g., mediation, problem solving workshops, dialogue); or on one of a variety of problems/puzzles/issues in our field (e.g., power in theory and practice, an ethics of practice, conflict resolution and "transitional justice"). You could also choose a specific conflict case-study, so long as you discuss the problems, issues, etc., in theory, research or practice, that the case articulates. Ideally, you will choose to write on a topic that has engaged you deeply as part of your S-CAR education, and/or that you hope to pursue as a professional in the field. Ideally, you would try to construct a notion of "integration" around the topic you choose.

2500-2750 words, due May 4 (50%)

Delays, deferrals, or a grade of “incomplete” for the course will be given only in cases of personal or immediate family crisis.

Please note: I use your GMU mail account as my primary means of communication outside normal class hours. You will need to activate this account and/or make sure any other account you use forwards your mail to it.

Students are unconditionally expected to abide by the GMU Honor Code. If you are unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism, for example in citation of others’ work, feel free to consult with me prior to handing your own work in.

Course Program

- Week 1 1/23:** Course orientation; Problems, Puzzles and Issues in the Field; Unfinished Business; Field mapping preliminaries
- Week 2 1/30:** The idea of “Integration.” Presentation and discussion of CR Field Maps
Read: In Cheldelin, chaps 1 and 2; In Jeong, chap. 1
Prepare your individual map of the field and be prepared to present & discuss it in class. Maps will be turned in at the end of the class (keep a copy for yourself)
Self select teams for future group presentations
- Week 3 2/6:** How the field comes to be, a brief history
Sample a few interviews from the Parents of the Field Project
<http://icar.gmu.edu/parents>
- Week 4 2/13:** What the field looks like today: from Management to Transformation
Read: In Jeong, chaps. 2-3; in Cheldelin chaps 3-5.
- Week 5 2/20:** Collaborative research in ICAR/S-CAR: The Zones of Peace Project. Guest: Prof. Chris Mitchell
Reflective Essay due in Class
- Week 6 2/27:** Connecting Conflict Analysis to Intervention (and don’t Forget Evaluation). Guest: Dr. Adina Friedman
- Week 7 3/5:** Careers in the Field (and how to get one)
Prepare and bring a resume to class for discussion
Guests: Julie Shedd and Tammie Howell
- Week 8 3/12:** Mid-Semester Recess: No Class

- Week 9 3/19:** Team meetings in class to prepare for presentations
First and Second Groups chosen
**Teams report out to class; preliminary assignments
Given out to Class (readings from Cheldelin & Jeong)**
- Week 10 3/26:** Integration and Problem Solving; Decision Making (or not) in
Teams. Guest: Prof. Dave Davis, Peace Operations Policy
Program, School of Public Policy
**Additional reading assignments by First Groups (extra
Cheldelin and Jeong)**
- Week 11 4/2:** Integrating the Field: A view from Outside the Academy
Guest: Dr Mary Hope Schwoebel, USIP
- Week 13 4/16:** Team presentations, First Groups
**Additional reading assignments by Second Groups (extra
Cheldelin and Jeong)**
- Week 14 4/23:** Team presentations, Second Groups
- Week 15 4/30:** Integrating the Field, Integrating a Life in the Field
Read: In Cheldelin, chap. 22; Lederach, all

TERM PAPER DUE FRIDAY MAY 4 BY 1.00 pm IN MY S-CAR MAILBOX
Hardcopy preferred; keep an electronic one available