

CONF 501.002
Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution
Fall 2008
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[Professor of Philosophy]
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Office Hours: Mondays 3:00 to 4:30 and 7:10-8:00.
ARLTB 648

Description:

This course introduces students to central themes, concepts, and modes of practice in conflict analysis and resolution. In conflict analysis we seek an understanding of a conflict's social/political setting, the conditions that gave rise to negative relations among protagonists, and to the conflict's root causes. For analysis we must rely on certain concepts, models and methodologies. Recognizing the futility of many "quick fix" resolutions, conflict practitioners deploy a method of intervention that addresses the conflict's root causes, and that deals with long-term grievances that damaged the relationship between the protagonists.

In Unit I, we examine the means for a systematical analysis of conflicts of various forms. Unit II addresses the major topics of conflict management and resolution. In Unit III we examine four case studies, each of which provides a context for applying the themes from Units I and II. Throughout the course, we prioritize the tasks of reflecting critically on conflicts, drawing attention to its conditions, causes, and dynamics, as well as an evaluation of "what works" (or not) from various interventions.

OBJECTIVES

- a) Introduction to a systematic study of analysis and resolution of conflicts
- b) Examine alternative models for the causes of protracted conflicts.
- c) Demonstrate how skillful intervention by a practitioner requires critical reflection on the techniques deployed.
- d) Test interventionist techniques against case studies, revealing comparative strengths and weaknesses of various methods.
- e) Show the ethical underpinnings of practice by exposing for each method the value-commitments towards, for example, peace, equality, or justice.
- f) Show the close connections among conflict theories, research findings, and modes of practice.

Texts:

John Paul Lederach, Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies Washington, DC. United States Institute of Peace, 1997. ISBN 1-878379-73-9 (paper). [BP]

Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall, Contemporary Conflict Resolution: the prevention, management sand Transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Oxford: Polity Press, 2005 (Second Edition): 0-7456-3213-0 (paperback) [CCR]

Dean Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim, Social Conflict, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004, 3rd Edition. ISBN 0-072805535-5. [SC]

I. William Zartman, ed., PEACEMAKING IN INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT: Methods and Techniques (Revised Edition) United States Institute of Peace [PIC]

Additional Chapters:

All but one of these chapters are available through the Library's ereserve system.

Using the following link to search Electronic Reserves

<http://furbo.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/ers/OSCRgen.cgi>

Course: 501-002/ Instructor Rothbart

Password: introduction

Do not use spaces or caps for passwords

The chapter by Rothbart and Korostelina is included as an attachment in Blackboard.

Nicole Ball, "The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn Societies," in Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, eds., Turbulent Peace: the Challenges of Managing International Conflict, Chapter 42 (ereserve).

Burton, J. (1993). Conflict Resolution as a political philosophy. In Dennis J.D. Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe, (Eds). Conflict resolution theory and Practice. Manchester University Press. (ereserve)

Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, peace and peace research. Journal of Peace Research, 6 (3): 167-191. (ereserve)

Schoeny, Mara and Warfield, Wallace. (2000). Reconnecting systems maintenance with social justice: A critical role for conflict resolution, Negotiation Journal 16: (3): 253-268. (ereserve)

Avruch, Kevin and Black, Peter (1993). Conflict resolution in intercultural settings: problems and prospects. In Dennis J.D. Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe, (Eds). Conflict resolution theory and Practice. Manchester University Press. (ereserve)

Mara Schoeny and Wallace Warfield, "Reconnecting systems maintenance with social justice" Negotiation Journal 16: (3): 253-268. (ereserve)

Avruch, Kevin and Black, Peter (1993). Conflict resolution in intercultural settings: problems and prospects. In Dennis J.D. Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe, (Eds). Conflict resolution theory and Practice. Manchester University Press. (ereserve)

Christopher Mitchell, "The Process and Stages of Mediation: Two Sudanese Case" David R. Smock, Editor, Making War and Waging Peace: Foreign Intervention in Africa. USIP. (ereserve)

Rothbart and Korostelina, "The Enemy and the Innocent of Violent Conflict," in Conflict Resolution: Core Concepts, Theories, Approaches and Practices, [Send: email]

Teaching Technology: Blackboard

courses.gmu.edu
gmu.blackboard.com

username:
password:
OK

We use Blackboard for the following

Syllabus
Links to Ereserve articles
Additional chapter: "The Enemy and the Innocent in Violent Conflict,"

Case Studies:

Case #1: MOVE

Assefa and Wharharftig, The MOVE crisis in Philadelphia and video.

Case #2 South Africa

Waldmeir, Patti. Anatomy of a Miracle: The end of apartheid and the birth of the new South Africa. W. W. New York: Norton and Company.

[Group Presentations]

Case #3 Rwanda

Arthur Jay Klinghoffer, The International Dimension of genocide in Rwanda.

[Group Presentations]

Case #4 Copper Strike

Kingslover, Barbara (1989). Holding the Line: ; Women in the great Arizona Mind Strike of 1983.

Course Schedule:

Week 1 (August 25) Introduction. Course themes, objectives, requirements, and activities.

UNIT I: Sources of Protracted Conflict

Week 2: (September 8) Topic: What is Conflict Theory?

Readings:

Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, Chapters 1 and 2, SC

“J. Lewis Rasmussen, “Peacemaking in the Twenty-first Century: New Rules, New Roles, New Actors” Chapter 1, PIC.

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Introduction to Conflict Resolution: Concepts and Definitions" Chapter 1, CCR.

Week 3 (September 15) The Nature of Violent Conflict

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Conflict Resolution: Foundations, Constructions and Reconstructions," Chapter 2, CCR.

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Statistics of Deadly Quarrels," Chapter 3, CCR.

Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, peace and peace research. Journal of Peace Research, 6 (3): 167-191. (e-reserve)

Week 4 (September 22) Understanding Conflicts

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Understanding Contemporary Conflict" Chapter 4, CCR.

Burton, J. (1993). Conflict Resolution as a political philosophy. In Dennis J.D. Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe, (Eds). Conflict resolution theory and Practice. Manchester University Press. (E-Reserve)

Avruch, Kevin and Black, Peter (1993). Conflict resolution in intercultural settings: problems and prospects. In Dennis J.D. Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe, (Eds). Conflict resolution theory and Practice. Manchester University Press. (E-Reserve)

[Take-home exam distributed in class, due next class.]

UNIT II: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RSOLUTION

Week 5 (September 29) Conflict Strategies and Dynamics of Escalation

Pruitt and Kim, Social Conflict, Chapters 3 – 9, SC.

Week 6 (October 6) Conflict Strategies and Dynamics of Escalation

Pruitt and Kim, Social Conflict, Chapters 10-11, SC.

Jacob Bercovitch, "Mediation in International Conflict: An overview of Theory, A Review of Practice," Chapter 4, PIC.

Week 7 (October 14) [Monday classes meet Tuesday] Mediation

Christopher Mitchell, "The Process and Stages of Mediation: Two Sudanese Case," David R. Smock, Editor, Making War and Waging Peace: Foreign Intervention in Africa. USIP. [ereserve]

Herbert Kelman, "Social-Psychological Dimensions of International Conflict" Chapter 6, PIC.

Ronald J. Fisher, "Social-Psychological Processes in Interactive Conflict Analysis and Reconciliation," Chapter 7, PIC.

Week 8 (October 20) Reconciliation

John Paul Lederach, Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies. Washington, DC. United States Institute of Peace, 1997.

Cynthia Sampson, "Religion and Peacebuilding," Chapter 8, PIC.

UNIT 3: Case Studies

Week 9 (October 27) Case Study: MOVE

Assefa and Wharharftig, The MOVE crisis in Philadelphia, et. and video.

Week 10 (November 10) Case Study: South Africa

Waldmeir, Patti. Anatomy of a Miracle: The end of apartheid and the birth of the new South Africa. W. W. New York: Norton and Company.

[Group Presentations]

Rothbart and Korostelina, "The Enemy and the Innocent in Violent Conflict," in Conflict Resolution: Core Concepts, Theories, Approaches and Practices, [Sent by email]

Week 11 (November 17) Case Study: Rwanda

Arthur Jay Klinghoffer, The International Dimension of genocide in Rwanda.

[Group Presentations]

Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, "Preventing Violent Conflict" Chapter 5, CCR.

Week 12 (November 24) Case Study: Copper Strike

Kingslover, Barbara (1989). Holding the Line: Women in the great Arizona Mine Strike of 1983.

UNIT 4: Integrating theory, research, and practice

Week 13 (December 1) Evaluation of Practice

Mara Schoeny and Wallace Warfield, "Reconnecting systems maintenance with social justice" Negotiation journal 16: (3): 253-268. [ereserve]

Pamela Aall, Jeffrey Helsing, and Alan Tidwell, "Addressing Conflict through Education", Chapter 10, PIC.

[Group Presentation]

Week 14 (December 8) The future of the Field

Course Requirements

Each class session will include a discussion-component that calls for active participation. Of course, regular attendance is expected.

The course grade will be determined by an evaluation of a take-home exam, a team presentation, a written paper, and a final exam.

1. Take-home Exam. A take home exam will be distributed during Session 5 and returned during class of session 6. 15% of course grade.

2. Team presentation. The class will be divided into teams of 4-5 students per team. Each team will select a case from one of the four cases provided. The primary objective of the team is to provide a critical reflection on the case, focusing on an analysis of the conflict setting, activities of conflict protagonists, the evaluation of interveners and an assessment of what went wrong and/or right. Such reflection draws attention to certain commitments that lie just below the surface of research activities, yet are pivotal to why and how conflict analysts do research. The critical thinking components are “organically” integrated into the course. The background information is given in the readings provided, but the group is encouraged to retrieve additional readings. Of course, the group is expected to rely on the concepts, models, and themes presented during the course. The presentations will be scheduled for Weeks 9, 10, 11, and 12. Grades will be assigned separately to each team member; each presentation grade represents 25% of the course grade.

3. Term Paper. Each student will write a term paper that is at least 15 pages, double-spaced on the topic of the case study. [Refer to Appendix I of the ICAR Handbook.] The primary objective is to provide in some depth a critical reflection of the case that was given in the group project. The analysis must include an application of the topics, concepts, and themes of the course.

4. Final Exam. The final examination is comprehensive of the course themes. This will be distributed during session 14, and due on December.

HONOR POLICY

All students are expected to abide by the Honor Code:

Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

Failure to comply with this code may result in academic penalty in accordance with the procedures of the Honor Committee.