

CONF 501  
INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION

Semester: Spring 2011  
Class Time: Thursday, 4:30pm-7:10pm  
Location: Truland room 647  
Instructor: Howon Jeong  
Office Hour: By appointment  
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### Course Objectives

This course is designed to introduce the basic theories and analytical framework of conflict to those who are interested in how to manage adversarial relationships in human society. The concepts and case studies to be examined in the class are relevant to different levels of analysis, i.e., inter-state and inter-group conflicts as well as issues which have global implications. This class should be useful for enhancing our understanding of various types of conflicts emerging in social relationships of a modern society.

The topics are not limited to ethno-political conflict, but also include environmental, organizational, religious and other types of conflicts that may result from incompatible economic interests and identity and value differences. Reflecting on the development of conflict studies, theoretical and conceptual explanations offered in this class benefit from cross utilization of multi-disciplinary approaches, especially, international relations, political science, sociology, psychology, communication, and anthropology.

The class is intended to enrich and expand our knowledge about conflict resolution by overcoming the limited scope of traditional management and control approaches to conflict which are commonly accepted in public policy and other traditional disciplinary fields (oriented toward the maintenance of the status quo). In providing foundational knowledge for students of conflict studies, this class will not only examine emerging theories, but also refer to classical work in conflict studies.

In enhancing the practical knowledge base for students, various concepts (related to conflict dynamics and processes) will be applied to important past and current issues. The class will discuss the kinds of concepts that need to be further developed and explore the methods of profiling and mapping conflict. As an applied field, our attention will be focused on the utility of concepts and theories in the comparison of diverse human experiences.

The class schedule for the entire semester is divided into three parts. The lesson will start with identifying the principles and methods of conflict analysis along with the introduction of basic concepts popularly used in the field. The second part of the course will focus on conflict dynamics and processes that will be followed by the investigation

of strategies and methods of conflict resolution. The final part of the course will be devoted to case studies that are drawn from real world events.

### Class Activities and Requirements:

Besides regular class attendance and participation, students are asked to submit a short written comment on one of the readings for each session. There are a mid-term exam and research paper. Students also need to prepare for a group presentation of a case study assigned to them. The course grade is determined by each week's notes (20%), midterm (20%), group presentation (10%), and final research paper (50%).

Permission for late submission of assignments and a grade of "incomplete" for the course will be given only in cases of personal illness or immediate family crisis. Late papers will receive penalized points. Students should also read the statement of ICAR's Academic Standards and the University's Honor Code (also referred to at the end of this syllabus).

\* Weekly Notes: Two page (single sided) written summary of reading assignments (20%): before the class starts, students will submit a one page reflection note including short comments, thoughts, reflections, questions, etc, about each week's topic. The note may include a glossary of important concepts which students consider important as well as the identification of key theories. The collection of these exercises will account for 20% of the final grade.

\* The mid-term exam (20%): This exam is due 24 March. A 5 page essay (in single space) is expected to cover the integration of the lessons prior to the exam.

\* Final Research Paper (50%): Students will be asked to choose particular conflict events, and apply a conflict process model to their cases. The paper needs to demonstrate a student's ability to apply concepts of conflict analysis to a particular conflict.

\* The group presentation (10%) is based on one of Kashmir, Northern Ireland, Mozambique, Colombia, and the MOVE crisis in Philadelphia. Each group will choose and analyze the full course of events. It is an exercise to help students get more familiar with the tools of conflict analysis. Each group will be allowed 40-50 minutes to make their presentation.

Jammu and Kashmir

Rai, Mridu. (2004). Hindu rulers, Muslim subjects: Islam, rights, and the history of Kashmir. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Northern Ireland

McKittrick, David. (2001). Making sense of the Troubles: The story of the conflict in Northern Ireland. New York: Penguin.

US Race relations and urban tensions

Assefa, Hizkias and Wahrhaftig, Paul. (1990). The MOVE crisis in Philadelphia: extremist groups and conflict resolution. University of Pittsburgh Press.

#### Mozambique

Hume, Cameron R. (1994). Ending Mozambique's War: The Role of Mediation and Good Offices. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

#### Colombia

Bouvier, Virginia M. (2009). Colombia: Building Peace in a Time of War (editor). DC: USIP Press.

#### Required Reading

Major textbooks include Ho-won Jeong, Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis, London: Sage Publication (2008); Hugh Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham, and Tom Woodhouse, Contemporary Conflict Resolution 2 nd ed. (Oxford: Polity Press, 2005). These books are available for purchase at the Arlington Bookstore. Book chapters and journal articles assigned to this class can be found on electronic reserve in the Arlington Library or available through the library's electronic journal databases.

#### Course Schedule

##### I. Conflict: Sources, Processes, and Dynamics

Session 1: (27 January): Introduction  
Overview of the course

Session 2: (3 February): Approaches in conflict analysis and resolution

Miall, Ramsbotham, and Woodhouse, Ch. 1-2

Ho-won Jeong, Ch. 1-2

##### Recommended Reading:

Pruitt, Dean G. (2010), 'SOCIAL CONFLICT AND NEGOTIATION' in in A. W. Kruglanski and W. Stroebe (Eds.), Handbook of the history of social psychology. New York: Psychology Press.

Session 3: (10 February): Conflict Situations and Their Management

Ho-won Jeong, Ch. 3-4

Miall, Ramsbotham, and Woodhouse, Ch. 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10

##### Recommended Reading:

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* (Manchester, 1993).

Session 4: (17 February): Conflict Process, Dynamics and Systems

Miall, Ramsbotham, and Woodhouse, Ch. 4

Ho-won Jeong, Ch. 5-7

Recommended Reading

Schoeny and Warfield, "Reconnecting Systems Maintenance with Social Justice", *Negotiation Journal*

Session 5: (24 February): Escalation and Entrapment

Ho-won Jeong, Ch. 8

Recommended Reading:

Ronald F. Fisher, *The Social Psychology of Intergroup and International Conflict*, New York: Springer-Verlag, 1990

John F. Dovidio, et al., 'A Social Psychology of National and International Group Relations', *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 54, No. 4, 1998, pp. 831-846

Session 6 (3 March): De-escalation and Ending

Jeong, Chapters 9-11

Miall, Ramsbotham, and Woodhouse, Ch. 12-13.

Recommended Reading:

Walter G. Stephan, 'Psychological and Communication Processes Associated With Intergroup Conflict Resolution' *Small Group Research*, Volume 39 Number 1, February 2008, 28-41

Robarchek, Clyton. 1997. *A Community of Interest: Semai Conflict Resolution*. In *Cultural Variation in Conflict Resolution. Alternatives to Violence*, edited by D. P. a. B. Fry, Kay: Erlbaum Publishers.

Session 7 (10 March): Search for Peaceful Settlement:

Jeong, Howon, *Conflict Management and Resolution*, Chapter 8

Recommended Reading:

Pruitt, Dean (1981), *Negotiation Behavior*, Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. 1-56

Druckman, Daniel (2009), 'International Negotiation' Oxford Encyclopedia

J Poitras, RE Bowen, 'Bringing Horses to Water? (2003) Overcoming Bad Relationships in the Pre-Negotiating Stage of Consensus Building', *Negotiation Journal*, Volume 19, Number 3, 251-263

Week Spring Break: 17 March

Session 8 (24 March): Midterm Exam Due

Meetings for Group Presentations

Session 9 (31 March): Reconciliation and Post-Conflict Reconstruction

Miall, Ramsbotham, and Woodhouse, Ch. 9-10.

Recommended Reading:

Karen Brounéus 'Analyzing Reconciliation: A Structured Method for Measuring National Reconciliation Initiatives', *Peace and Conflict*, 14:3, pp. 291 — 313, July 2008

Ervin Staub (2006), 'Reconciliation after Genocide, Mass Killing, or Intractable Conflict: Understanding the Roots of Violence, Psychological Recovery, and Steps toward a General Theory' *Political Psychology*, Vol. 27, No. 6

Session 10 (7 April): Case Studies: Kashmir, Northern Ireland

Group Presentations

Session 11 (14 April): Case Studies: Mozambique and Colombia

Group Presentations

Session 12 (21 April): Case Studies: The MOVE Crisis

Group Presentations

Session 13 (28 April): Integration

Session 14 (5 May): Final paper is due

Review and Future Research

GMU Honor Code and Plagiarism:

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](http://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.

ICAR 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. ICAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it.