

CONF 665: Conflict Resolution in Complex Humanitarian Crises

Dr. Mazur

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Office Hours by Appointment

An Experiential Learning Class (Field Training Exercise or FTX)

School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution

George Mason University

Arlington, VA

Spring Semester 2017 3 credits

Founders Hall Room 465

Friday	February	10	7-9:30 pm
Friday	February	24	7-9:30
Friday	March	10	7-9:30
Thurs–Sun	March	16-19	Field Training Exercise, Fellsmere, Florida
Friday	March	31	7-9:30
Friday	April	7	7-9:30

Course Description: This unique, hands-on class is designed to simulate a humanitarian crisis and create the learning environment where participants actively practice and demonstrate the skills needed to lead through a crisis. Students will deploy to a fictional, war-torn country. By assuming a series of roles and responsibilities, students together seek to formulate and implement strategies and interventions for managing a disaster in a “lived” scenario. The students experience common obstacles, disputes, and challenges that must be proactively addressed and resolved as the exercise unfolds.

Learning Objectives: Students will

- Learn the skills and expertise needed to be a Conflict Resolution Professional who is working with and serving others under emergency conditions.
- Come to understand the varied issues of disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.
- Practice how to prevent or alleviate human suffering through the simulation of many facets of disaster operations.
- Learn to analyze a multitude of interests, political concerns, and international and domestic issues. Students will understand and practice the skills of negotiating, mediating, organizing, and providing disaster relief services.
- Conduct a self-reflective analysis of the role of the Conflict Resolution Professional in a humanitarian crisis and analyze how practitioners can work better with others to design strategic plans for controlling violence and resolving conflict.

Class Meeting Times and Readings

- I. **Friday February 10 7-9:30 pm**
Introduction & Anatomy of a Crisis: Narratives, Framing & Meaning Making
Read before class: Boin, Arjen et al. The Politics of Crisis Management: Public Leadership Under Pressure, pp. 1-17; 69-88
Button, Gregory. Disaster Culture: Knowledge and Uncertainty in the Wake of Human and Environmental Catastrophe, pp. 11-18; 149-166
Klein, Naomi. The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism, pp. 1-25
Perrow, Charles. Normal Accidents, pp. 3-31 & 62-100
- II. **Friday February 24 7-9:30 pm**
Who Should Intervene and How?
Materials handed out on Day One
- III. **Friday March 4 7-9:30 pm**
How Does One Prepare?
Materials handed out on Day One
- IV. **Thursday March 16-Sunday March 19**
Field Training Exercise Fellsmere, Florida
Read before class: Matyók, Thomas, Jessica Senehi, and Sean Byrne. Critical Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies: Theory, Practice, and Pedagogy, pp. 3-18.
Mayer, Bernard S. The Dynamics of Conflict a Guide to Engagement and Intervention, pp. 211-68.
- V. **Friday March 31 7-9:30 pm**
How Do We Measure Resiliency & How Do We Capture Learning from the Last Disaster?
Read before class: Ramsbotham, Oliver, Hugh Miall, and Tom Woodhouse. Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts, pp. 185-215.
- VI. **Friday April 7 7-9:30 pm**
Wrap Up
Read before class: Ripley, Amanda. The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes and Why, pp. 163-178.
Jeong, Peacebuilding Design, Chpt. 7, in Approaches to Peacebuilding, pp. 147-170.

Grading: Your grade in this class will be determined as follows:

Class Participation:	25%
Journal:	25%
Field Experience Participation:	25%
Final Paper:	25%

Journal

You will have an ongoing writing assignment, i.e., keeping a journal of your reactions to class, the readings, and the field experience. This should reflect your analysis of and reflections on what you are learning and experiencing. The journal should be between 7-12 pages. **Journal**

Deadline: Your Journal is due by noon on April 24.

Class Participation/Attendance Policy

Fifty percent (50%) of your grade will be based on class and field participation. Because of the nature of this course, it is vital that you attend, are prompt, and are well-prepared for each class. Your participation will include leading class discussions and reporting on key readings. Participation will reflect thoughtful reactions to the readings and class discussions. Your field experience requires that you be fully committed to the simulation and attend all activities. You will be expected to cooperate and strategize with you partners, team mates, and overall group.

Final Paper

By March 31, please give me a short statement of your thesis or topic. Please select a domestic or international disaster and analyze it from any perspective you prefer, e.g., environmental, media coverage, economic issues, leadership issues, etc. You may also select an issue and compare two different disasters. The role of conflict analysis and resolution must figure prominently in your research and analysis. Your paper should reflect your own thoughts and analysis. Most papers will be around 10-15 pages long (double spaced). Please discuss your topic with Dr. Mazur: cmazur1@gmu.edu. **Paper Deadline: Your final paper is due by noon on April 24.**

George Mason Plagiarism Policy

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review. George Mason takes plagiarism very seriously. Although great ideas are advanced through collaboration, please be very careful in your work for this class to ensure proper attribution of sources. If you have not done so, please familiarize yourself with the Honor Code at <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/unilife/honorcode.html>.

University Resources and Assistance:

Writing Center: The Writing Center provides tutors who can help you develop ideas and revise papers at no charge. It can sometimes accommodate walk-ins, but generally, it is best to call for

an appointment. Location: ARL212 (in the main SPP suite). Contact: (703) 993-3762. The services of the Writing Center are also available on-line. <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>.

Disability Resource Center: The Disability Resource Center assists students with conditions affecting learning. Students with learning conditions that require special circumstances for exams or other writing assignments should provide documentation provided by the Disability Resource Center. Please contact the instructor to discuss your needs well in advance of the first class if possible. Location: SUB I, Room 222. Contact: 703-993-2474 or www.gmu.edu/student/drc/.

Bibliography and Additional Reading (Many available free online)

- Alexander, Jennifer. *Chasing Chaos*. New York: Random House, 2013.
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- Anderson, Mary. "Can My Good Intentions Make Things Worse? Lessons for Peacebuilding from the Field of International Humanitarian Aid." *A Handbook of International Peacebuilding: Into the Eye of the Storm*. Eds., Lederach et al. San Francisco: Wiley & Sons, 2002.
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<http://www.nrc.no/?did=9380550>
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- Buchanan, Cate and Robert Muggah. *No Relief: Surveying the Effects of Gun Violence on Humanitarian and Development Personnel*, Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2005. (15 pages).
- Burgess, Heidi, and Guy Burgess. *Conducting Track II Peacemaking* Washington, D.C.; USIP, 2010. <http://www.usip.org/publications/conducting-track-ii-peace-making>
- Button, Gregory. *Disaster Culture: Knowledge and Uncertainty in the Wake of Human and Environmental Catastrophe*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast P, 2010. Print.
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- Curle, Adam. *Tools for Transformation: A Personal Study*. Wallbridge, Stroud: Hawthorn P, 1990. Print.
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- Dworkin, Anthony, Roy Gutman, and David Rieff. *Crimes of War*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007. <www.crimesofwar.org>.
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- Gorman, David and Andre le Sage. *Engaging Armed Groups – the Practical Challenges: Negotiation Support*, Humanitarian Dialogue 4(c) 2004. (6 pages).
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- Klein, Naomi. *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. 1st ed. New York: Picador, 2008. Print.
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- Mahoney, Liam. *Proactive Presence: Field Strategies for Civilian Protection*, Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2006. (160 pages).
- Mancini-Griffoli, Deborah and Hugo Slim. “*Interpreting Violence: Anti-civilian Thinking and Practice and How to Argue Against it More Effectively*”. Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2007. (33 pages).
- Mancini-Roth, Deborah and André Picot. *Humanitarian Negotiation: A handbook for Securing Access, Assistance and Protection for Civilians in Armed Conflict*. Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2004. <<http://www.hdcentre.org/publications/humanitarian-negotiation-handbook-securing-access-assistance-and-protection-civilians>>
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- Notter, James and Louise Diamond. “Building Peace and Transforming Conflict: Multi-Track Diplomacy in Practice.” The Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy: Occasional Paper Number 7. October 1996.
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