

**Intensive Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution**  
**CONF 502    Fall 2006**

Class Time:            Saturday and Sunday, 11:00-5:00  
                              September 16 &17, October 14 &15, November 4 & 5

Location:              Arlington Campus – Truland Building, Room 666B  
                              webct41.gmu.edu

Instructor:            Mara Schoeny, Ph.D.  
                              (703) 993-9191  
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Office hours:         Tuesdays—3:00 to 5:00 and by appointment

**Course Description and Objectives**

Welcome to the course and to the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution. This course is an introduction to the field of conflict analysis and resolution. Our focus is the study of human social conflict, the practices and strategies for responding to conflict and frameworks for trying to resolve conflict. It is designed to introduce you to academic thinking about conflict analysis and resolution and to help you to think systematically and analytically about conflict and conflict intervention.

This course will be run as a learning community—discussions, written assignments and in-class activities will facilitate the exchange of thinking and experience. Please read the assigned books and articles prior to class. Active participation is expected, both in-class and online. The compressed course format means that the online component is a key element of your course learning and experience. Participants will work together in small groups and individually to analyze and suggest responses to specific cases of small group, community, inter-group or international conflict.

The three weekends will address the following objectives:

- ◆ Class participants will learn and be asked to critically examine the worldviews, values, and assumptions underlying the conceptual frameworks people use when analyzing and responding to conflict.
- ◆ Conflict resolution practices reflect the assumptions used to understand conflict and conflict behavior. Class participants will study the relationship between analyzing conflict and attempting to resolve it.

## Course Expectations

1. *Consistent attendance.* Barring exceptional circumstances, you are expected to attend all weekends for the full time scheduled.
2. *Effective preparation.* Class will involve discussions and activities which depend on your preparation.
3. *Appropriate participation.* Engage actively in the course in whichever of the formats you are most comfortable with: large group discussions, homework assignments, small group work, class exercises, etc.
4. *Course completion.* In keeping with departmental policy, incomplete grades will be given only in cases of personal or immediate family illness.

## Course Requirements

1. *Participation, short in-class exercises and online discussions.* **20 percent**  
In addition to in-class exercises and participation, there will be several discussion topics or short exercises posted to the course online discussion board in WebCT. Your postings or responses are due on the discussion board by the due date specified. These short assignments should not take more than half an hour and are opportunities for you to reflect on course concepts between classes. These are graded only as completed or not and contribute to your participation grade. I hope you will also enjoy reading the insights of your colleagues and the developing discussions on the class discussion board.
2. *Short essay assignment* **20 percent**  
In lieu of a midterm, you will have a short essay assignment, handed out in class and due by the date specified. Your answers to the short questions should be typed and returned via email or the instructor's departmental mail box. Due: October 10<sup>th</sup>
3. *Group project—in-depth study of conflict resolution intervention* **25 percent.**  
Groups of 4 to 5 students will be formed during the first weekend and will work throughout the course to examine a particular form of conflict intervention (chosen in consultation with the course instructor.) The groups will work together to apply the concepts, theories, and ideas presented in the course to analyze the underlying assumptions, appropriate applications and distinguishing features of your area of study. Your project should include an example of your intervention type applied to a conflict. There will be some time for groups to meet during class time, but outside meetings will also be necessary. Each group will present its study to the class with supporting materials made available online. Due: Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>
4. *Individual analysis/assessment of a conflict* **35 percent**  
In consultation with the instructor, you will choose a conflict from your experience for an analytical assessment and recommendations for next steps. The paper should be 15-20 pages and is a synthesis and application of the conflict concepts covered in the course. The topics will be agreed upon by the third weekend of the course. Final paper due: Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>

## Readings

### Texts

The required texts are available at the GMU Arlington Bookstore or from online booksellers:

Dean G. Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim, *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition).

Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall. *Contemporary Conflict Resolution* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press 2005 2nd edition).

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

John Paul Lederach, *Little Book of Conflict Transformation* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2003)

Hizkias Assefa and Paul Wahrhaftig, *The MOVE Crisis in Philadelphia: Extremist Groups and Conflict Resolution* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990).

### Other readings

You will be directed to additional assigned readings and resources online. Many of these readings are PDF files and can be read using an Adobe reader, available for download on the library webpage. Please let me know if you need assistance with this technology.

Kevin Avruch and Peter Black, "Conflict Resolution in Intercultural Settings: Problems and Prospects," in Sandole & van der Merwe, eds., *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application* (Manchester, 1993).

Michael Brown, "Ethnic and Internal Conflicts," in Crocker, Hampson & Aall, eds., *Turbulent Peace: the Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, (USIP: 2001), pp. 209-226.

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).

Thomas Hylland Erickson. "Ethnic Identity, National Identity, and Intergroup Conflict: The Significance of Personal Experiences" in Ashmore, Jussim & Wilder, eds. *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Reduction*, (Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 42-68.

Ronald J. Fisher and Loreleigh Keashly, "The Potential Complementarity of Mediation and Consultation within a Contingency Model of Third Party Consultation," *Journal of Peace Research* 28:1 (1991): 29-42.

Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6:3 (1969): 167-91.

Janice Gross Stein, "Image, Identity, and Conflict Resolution," in Crocker, Hampson & Aall, eds., *Managing Global Chaos*. (USIP, 1997), pp. 93-111.

Gerald Cormick & James Laue (1978). The ethics of intervention in community disputes. *The ethics of social intervention*. G. Bermant, H. C. Kelman & D. Warwick. Washington, DC, Halstead Press: 205-232.

Laurie Nathan. "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: The Structural Cause of Violence in Africa." *Track Two*, Vol. 10: 2, August 2001. Online at:  
[http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/archive/two/10\\_2/p04\\_horsemen.html](http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/archive/two/10_2/p04_horsemen.html)

Mara Schoeny & Wallace Warfield, "Reconnecting Systems Maintenance with Social Justice: A Critical Role for Conflict Resolution." *Negotiation Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 3, July 2000, pp. 253-268.

## Class Agenda

### Weekend One

#### Day 1

##### Introduction

- Class members: introductions, interests
- Course overview and organization
- Introduction to the field: Conflict, Conflict Analysis, and Conflict Resolution
- Current issues in the field

##### Frameworks for Analysis

- Analytical concepts and frameworks
- Analytical frameworks' assumptions of human nature and social structures

#### Day 2

##### Analyzing Community Conflict

- MOVE in Philadelphia

##### Conflict Behavior and Responses to Conflict

- Frameworks for understanding responses to conflict
- Threats, coercion, and violence/nonviolence, persuasion, and conversion
- Dual concern model

##### *Reading for Weekend One:*

Pruitt & Kim, Chapters 1-3

Miall, Ramsbotham & Woodhouse, Chapters 1-3

Assefa & Wahrhaftig, all

Burton, Conflict resolution as a political philosophy

Dukes, Why Conflict Transformation Matters: Three Cases

Laue & Cormick, Ethics of community intervention

Schoeny & Warfield, Reconnecting systems maintenance to social justice

##### *Assignments:*

1. Form groups for forms of intervention study (in-class)
2. Online assignment, due by September 22. Post to class discussion board.
3. Online assignment, due by September 29. Post to class discussion board.
4. Short essay due: by October 10<sup>th</sup>. Hard copy or email to instructor directly.

## **Weekend Two:**

### **Day 1**

#### **Library Research Orientation**

##### **Conflict Dynamics**

- Conflict structure
- Conflict escalation and de-escalation

##### **Conflict Context**

- Identity
- Structure
- Violence

##### *Reading for Class:*

Pruitt & Kim, Chapters 4-8

Miall, Ramsbothan & Woodhouse, Chapter 5

Brown, “Ethnic and Internal Conflicts”

Erickson. “Ethnic Identity, National Identity...Significance of Personal Experiences”

Gross Stein, “Image, Identity, and Conflict Resolution”

Nathan, “The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse”

### **Day 2**

#### **Conflict Context continued**

##### **Conflict De-escalation and Peace Building**

- Dynamics of de-escalation
- Third party roles and interventions

##### *Reading for Class:*

Pruitt & Kim, Chapters 9-11

Lederach, Chapters 3-6 (Building Peace)

##### *Assignments:*

1. Online assignment, due by October 20<sup>th</sup>. Post to class discussion board
2. Online assignment, due by October 27<sup>th</sup>. Post to class discussion board

## **Weekend Three**

### **Day 1**

#### **Group Presentations on Interventions**

- Forms of intervention
- Applications

#### **Connecting analysis to intervention**

#### **Variety of roles, platforms, possible practices**

- Complementarity in multiple approaches
- Leadership roles

#### *Reading for Class:*

Lederach, Chapters 7-11 (Building Peace)

Fisher & Keashly, "The Potential Complementarity of Mediation and Consultation...."  
Saunders, "Prenegotiation and Circumnegotiation: Arenas of the Peace Process,"  
Other readings to be announced

### **Day 2**

#### **Issues in Conflict Resolution Practice**

- Defining success
- Social justice
- Culture

#### **Summary and Integration**

- Problem Solving, Settlement, Management and Conflict Transformation
- Mapping the field—concept maps and metaphors

#### **Course Evaluations**

#### *Reading for Class:*

Miall, Ramsbothan & Woodhouse, Chapter 8

Galtung, "Violence, peace and peace research"

Avruch & Black, "Conflict Resolution in Intercultural Settings: Problems and Prospects"

#### *Assignments:*

1. Group project presentation—forms of conflict resolution intervention (*in-class*). Supporting materials posted to course webpage.
2. Individual analysis/assessment of a conflict      Final paper due: Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>

## University Resources and Assistance

- If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.
- The Writing Center is available to all Mason students and offers online and individual consultations as well as workshops and mini-courses. Writers at all levels can benefit. Each Mason campus has a location. You can find them on the Arlington Campus in the Original Building, Room 334C, by phone at 703 993-4491 or online at: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>
- Academic integrity: You are responsible for knowing, understanding, and following Mason's Honor Code, found at: <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12>. Be sure that all work submitted is your own and that you use sources appropriately. I strongly recommend that you review requirements regarding use and citation of sources prior to submitting your final work.