

# Conflict Analysis and Resolution



**Instructor: Dr. Marisa O. Ensor**

## Course Description

This seminar introduces students to the interdisciplinary field of conflict analysis and resolution from both theoretical and applied/practical perspectives. We will examine the key concepts, definitions and theories of conflict causation, and consider a range of practical tools and approaches to conflict management. Attention will be paid to the distinguishing characteristics of social, political and economic conflicts, as well as to the challenges and opportunities presented by multi-level community organizing, grassroots conflict resolution and related strategies. Additional focal points include the role of culture, ethnicity, gender, intergenerational relations and religious affiliation on conflict dynamics and conflict resolution processes. Practical exercises will provide students with opportunities to analyze real life conflicts, and practice various methods for conflict resolution with an emphasis on collaborative problem solving, negotiation and mediation. Seminar-style discussions, presentations and practical exercises constitute the bulk of the course's structure, supplemented with occasional videos and guest speakers.

## Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this seminar students will be able to:

- Trace the historical development and current status of the conflict analysis and resolution field;
- Critically examine the key concepts, theories and ethical considerations underpinning conflict assessment and intervention strategies;
- Implement a range of conflict analysis tools and indices, recognizing their merits and limitations;
- Demonstrate a clear understanding the processes of negotiation, mediation, facilitation, and consensus building;
- Carry out a comprehensive conflict analysis, including prevailing conditions, dynamics, stakeholders and conflict resolution efforts;
- Recommend suitable conflict resolution interventions based on such analysis.

# Course Materials

- Furlong, Gary T.  
2005 ***The Conflict Resolution Toolbox: Models & Maps for Analyzing, Diagnosing and Resolving Conflict.*** Mississauga, Ontario: John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd.
- Levinger, Matthew  
2013 ***Conflict Analysis: Understanding Causes, Unlocking Solutions.*** Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press Books.
- Pruitt, Dean, Jeffrey Rubin and Sung Hee Kim  
2004 ***Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate and Settlement.*** New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall  
2011 ***Contemporary Conflict Resolution.*** Cambridge: Polity Press.
- *All additional readings (see Readings Schedule) will be made available through Blackboard.*

## Assessment

Students' performance in this course will be evaluated through the following activities and assignments:

- Critical Thinking Papers (4 X 25) = 100
- Conflict Analysis Tool = 100
- Conflict Mapping = 200
- Class Presentation = 50
- Class Participation = 50
- **Total Points** = **500**

Information on how to complete these assignments is included in this syllabus. Additional details will be provided in class.

## Grades will be assigned as follows

Points	Grade	Percentage	Points	Grade	Percentage
500-480	A	100 – 96%	394-380	C+	78 - 76%
479-459	A-	95 - 92%	379-355	C	75 - 71%
458-439	B+	91 - 88%	354-330	C-	70 - 66%
438-415	B	87 - 83%	329-305	D	65 - 61%
414-395	B-	82 - 79%	304 & below	F	60% & below

# Critical Thinking Papers

Students will submit four critical thinking papers answering questions, or responding to materials pertinent to the field of conflict analysis and resolution as provided by the instructor. Papers should be written thoughtfully, clearly and effectively, engaging the course readings to support the points made, which should be properly cited in any scholarly scientific style (i.e. Chicago, AAA, APA—note that this excludes the MLA). Required length is 4-6 pages, double spaced, 12-point font, plus a “Sources Cited” section.

## Conflict Analysis Tool

Each student will select one of the conflict analysis tools discussed in class (see Furlong's *The Conflict Resolution Toolbox* and Levinger's *The Practical Guide to Conflict Analysis*, as well as the additional examples of conflict analysis tools placed on Blackboard) and write a 6-8 page, double-spaced assessment of its utility (i.e. is intended use, merits, limitations and examples). See course schedule for specific dates.

## Conflict Mapping

The conflict mapping exercise will be conducted in groups of no more than 4 members. Each group will identify a suitable local, national or international conflict and produce a report comprising:

- 1) A discussion of the situation, including a formal analysis (using a particular conflict analysis tool) of the underlying causes and prevailing conditions of the conflict, as well as its primary stakeholders and their interests and positions on the issues at hand.
- 2) An assessment of the various methods of prevention, negotiation and third party intervention employed to facilitate the management/resolution of the conflict.
- 3) Group members' recommendations for suitable conflict resolution interventions based on their own analysis.

The final draft of the report should be 18-20 double-spaced pages. Additional detailed information on the various sections of the mapping exercise will be provided in class. Sample papers will also be provided. Students are encouraged to consult with the instructor on their chosen topic and its various components.

Additionally, each group will give a brief (15 min.) oral presentation discussing the main findings of their conflict mapping.

## Attendance and Participation

While no specific deductions of grade points will result from absences, students will be held responsible for all the material and information presented in class, whether they were present or not. Additionally, poor attendance will result in a low participation grade. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings by the dates they are assigned. Be considerate to other students. Please turn off your cell phone and do not engage in “private” conversations during lectures to avoid distracting other students.

## Withdrawals

Protect your GPA!! If deciding to withdraw from the course, it is the responsibility of the student to be certain s/he is officially withdrawn through the Registrar. Failure to officially withdraw typically results in a failing grade due to zero scores on exams and other graded assignments.

# Academic Honesty

This course will firmly adhere to the university code of conduct and ethical standards. Academic dishonesty includes representing another's work as one's own, active complicity in such falsification, and violation of test conditions. Plagiarism, whether deliberate or accidental, will be considered a form of academic dishonesty. Please consult with your instructor, or the pertinent university documentation, if unclear of what constitutes plagiarism or if unsure of how to reference your sources. Students found to be engaging in any academically dishonest behavior will receive a failing grade.

## Course Schedule, Readings and Assignments

- **Week 1 – Introduction to the Course**

**Readings:**

- No readings this week!

- **Week 2 – Development of the Conflict Analysis & Resolution Field, Part I.**

**Readings:**

- Avruch, K. 2003. "Context and Pretext in Conflict Resolution," *Journal of Dispute Resolution* 353.
- Kriesberg, L. 2007. "The Conflict Resolution Field: Origin, Growth, and Differentiation," in
- Ramsbotham et al, Chapters 1-2.
- Zartman, I.W. (ed.), *Peacemaking in International Conflict*. USIP. pp. 25-60.

- **Week 3 - Development of the Conflict Analysis & Resolution Field, Part II.**

**Readings:**

- Harbom, L. and Wallensteen, P. 2009. "Armed Conflicts, 1946-2008," *Journal of Peace Research*, 46(4), pp. 577-587.
- Howard, M. 2001. "The Causes of War," in *Turbulent Peace*, pp. 29-38.
- Pruitt and Kim, Ch. 1-2, "Overview," and "Nature and Sources of Conflict".
- Ramsbotham et al. Chapter 3, pp. 63-73.

- **Week 4 - Understanding Contemporary Conflict  
CRITICAL THINKING PAPER #1 DUE**

**Readings:**

- Azar, E.E. 1990. Introduction and Chapter 1, "Protracted Social Conflict," in *The Management of Protracted Social Conflict*. Hampshire, UK: Dartmouth, pp. 1-17.
- Hanle, D.J. 1989. Chapter 5, "Terrorism," in *Terrorism: The Newest Face of Warfare*. Washington, DC: Pergamon-Brassey's, pp. 103-120.
- Kelman, H. 1997. "Negotiating National Identity and Self-Determination in Ethnic Conflicts," *Negotiation Journal*, vol. 13(4), pp. 327-340.
- Levinger, Chapters 1 and 2.
- Levy, J. 2001. "Theories of Interstate and Intrastate War: a levels-of-analysis approach," in *Turbulent Peace*, pp. 3-27.
- Ramsbotham et al, Chapter 3, pp. 79-85, Chapter 4, pp. 94-111, and Chapter 11.
- Ruby, C.L. 2002. "The Definition of Terrorism." *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 2(1), pp. 9-14.

- **Week 5 - Frameworks & Tools for Conflict Analysis**

**Readings:**

- DFID Conflict Assessment: Guidance Notes.
- Dugan, M. 1996. "A Nested Theory of Conflict," *Leadership Journal*, v.1. pp. 9-19.
- Furlong, Chapters 1-3.
- Levinger, Chapters 3-7.
- Ramsbotham et al. Chapter 3 pp. 89-93; and Chapter 4, pp. 111-122.

- **Week 6 - Intergroup Conflicts & the Role of Identity**

**Readings:**

- Cook-Huffman, C. 2009. "The Role of Identity in Conflict," in D. Sandole et al. (eds) *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution*, chapter 1, pp. 17 – 30.
- Fukuyama, F. 2006. "Identity, Immigration and Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*. 17(2).
- Fukuyama, F. 2007. "Identity and Migration," *Prospect Magazine*. Issue 131.
- Gurr, T.R. 1993. "Why Minorities Rebel: Explaining Ethnopolitical Protest and Rebellion," Ch. 5, in *Minorities at Risk*. USIP pp. 123-138.
- Gurr, T.R. 2001. "Minorities and Nationalists," in Ch. Crocker et al. (eds) *Turbulent Peace*. USIP. pp. 138-188.

- **Week 7 - Culture and Ethnicity in Conflict & Conflict Resolution  
CRITICAL THINKING PAPER #2 DUE**

**Readings:**

- Avruch, K. 2004. "Culture as Context, Culture as Communication," *Harvard Negotiation Law Review*, January, pp. 324-349.
- Avruch, K. and Black, P. 1991. "The Culture Question and Conflict Resolution," *Peace and Change*, 16, pp. 22-45.
- Avruch, K. and Black, P. 1993. "Conflict Resolution in Intercultural Settings: Problems and Prospects." In D. Sandole & H. van der Merwe (eds.), *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice*. Manchester UP, pp. 131-145.
- Barash and Webel, Chapter 16, pp. 353-370 .
- Habyarimana, J. et al. 2008. "Is Ethnic Conflict Inevitable? Parting Ways over Nationalism and Separatism," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 87(4), pp. 138-151.
- Kimmel, P. 2006. "Culture and Conflict," in M. Deutsch et al. (eds) *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution*, chapter 28, pp. 625-648.
- Morris, M. 2001. "How Does Culture Influence Conflict Resolution? A Dynamic Constructivist Analysis," *Social Cognition*, vol. 19, pp. 324-349.
- Ramsbotham et al, Chapter 15.

- **Week 8 - The Role of Religion in Conflict & Conflict Resolution**

**Readings:**

- Abu-Nimer, M. 2008. "Muslim Peace Building Actors in Africa and the Balkans." *Peace and Change: A Journal of Peace Research*.
- Gopin, M. 2001. "Religion and International Relations at the Crossroads," *International Studies Review*, Vol 1 (1), pp. 157-160.
- Montville, J. 2001. "Religion and Peacemaking" in R. Helmick and R. Petersen (Eds.) *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy, and Con. Transformation*. CR
- Rouhana, N.N. 2004. "Group Identity and Power Asymmetry in Reconciliation Processes: The Israeli-Palestinian Case," *Peace and Conflict*, 10, pp. 33-52.

- **Week 9 – Gender Dynamics in Conflict and Conflict Resolution  
CRITICAL THINKING PAPER #3 DUE**

**Readings:**

- Berg, E. 1995. "Gendering Conflict Resolution" *Peace & Change*, 19(4), pp. 325-34.
- Cockburn, C. 2001. "The Gendered Dynamics of Armed Conflict and Political Violence," in C. Moser & F. Clark (eds.), *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors: Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*, pp. 115-127.
- Harris, C. 2011. "What can applying a gender lens contribute to conflict studies?" MICROCON Research Paper.
- Holter, O.T. 2002. "A Theory of Gendercide," *Journal of Genocide Research* 4(1), pp. 11-38.
- Ramsbotham et al, Ch. 13.
- Side by Side – Women, Peace and Security. UN documentary.
- Stevens, J. 1994. "Gender Conflict: Connecting Feminist Theory and Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice," in A. Taylor & J.B. Miller (eds.), *Conflict and Gender*, pp. 217-235.

- **Week 10 – Economic Dimensions of Conflict**

**Readings:**

- Collier, P. 2000. "Doing Well out of War: An Economic Perspective." In M. Berdal and D. Malone (eds). *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*. Boulder.
- Collier, P. 2001. "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy," in Ch. Crocker et al (eds) *Turbulent Peace*, pp. 143-162.
- Collier, P. et al. 2008. "Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 61, pp. 1-27.

- **Week 11 – Politics and Practices of Intervention  
CONFLICT ANALYSIS TOOL REPORT DUE**

**Readings:**

- Barash and Webel, Chapter 13, pp. 287-317
- Crocker, Ch. 2001. "Intervention: toward best practices and a holistic view," in *Turbulent Peace*, pp. 229-249.
- Freedman, L. 2001. "Interventionist strategies and the changing use of force," in *Turbulent Peace*, pp. 309-323.
- Haass, R. 2001. "Using Force: lessons and choices for U.S. foreign policy," *Turbulent Peace*, pp. 295-309.
- <http://www.berghof-handbook.net/all/>
- Paffenholz, T. "Designing Transformation and Intervention Processes."
- Pruitt & Kim, Chapter- 11, pp. 227-232
- Ramsbotham et al, Chapter 6.

- **Week 12 – Frameworks and Tools for Diagnosing and Resolving Conflict**

**Readings:**

- Furlong, Chapters 4-11.
- Levinger, Chapters 8-9.
- Sandole, D. "A Comprehensive Mapping of Conflict and CR: A Three Pillar Approach," <http://www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/sandole.htm>
- USAID Conflict Assessment Framework.

- **Week 13 - Negotiation and Mediation**  
**CRITICAL THINKING PAPER #4 DUE**

**Readings:**

- Fisher, R.J. 1994. "Generic Principles for Resolving Intergroup Conflict," *Journal of Social Issues* 50(1), 47-66.
- Hopmann, P.T. 1995. "Two Paradigms of Negotiation: Bargaining and Problem Solving," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 542, pp. 24-47.
- Kriesberg, L. 2007. Ch. 8-9, "Mediation in Conflicts," and "Negotiation in Settling Conflicts."
- Pearson d'Estree, T. and Babbitt, E. 1998. "Women and the Art of Peacemaking: Data from Israeli-Palestinian Interactive Problem-Solving Workshops." *Political Psychology*, 19, pp. 185-209.
- Pruitt and Kim, Ch. 10 "Problem Solving and Reconciliation," pp. 189-225.
- Rouhana, N. and Korper, S.H. 1997. "Power Asymmetry and Goals of Unofficial Third Party Intervention in Protracted Intergroup Conflict." *Peace and Conflict*, 3, pp. 1-17.
- Zartman, I. and Touval, S. 2007. "International Mediation," in Ch. Crocker et al (eds.), *Leashing the Dogs of War*. USIP, pp. 437-454.

- **Week 14: Peacemaking and Peacebuilding**

**Readings:**

- Barnett, M, et al, 2007. "What is in a name," *Global Governance* 13, pp. 35-58.
- Boutros-Ghali, B. 1992. Agenda for Peace.
- Doyle, M and Sambanis. 2000. "Peacebuilding: a theoretical and quantitative analysis," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 94(4), pp. 779-801.
- Lund, M. 1996. "Early Warning and Preventive Diplomacy," Chapter 26, in Crocker et al (eds.), *Managing Global Chaos*. Washington, DC: USIP, pp. 379-402.
- Ramsbotham et al, Chapter 7, 8, 9.

- **Week 15: Wrap Up. Last Day of Classes!!**

**CLASS PRESENTATIONS – CONFLICT MAPPING REPORT DUE**

\* *While this syllabus has been carefully constructed, your professor retains the right to make changes to it as course progress warrants, and pledges to give students the new information in a timely manner.*