

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION



Instructor:

Email:

Marisa O. Ensor, PhD, LLM

moe2@georgetown.edu

Course Description

This course offers a thorough grounding of Conflict Transformation as a philosophical orientation, theoretical framework, analytical strategy and practical approach to engage in contested situations. Course materials and activities seek to “transform” three major aspects of conflict: 1) what we think about conflict; 2) how we think about conflict; and 3) how we engage in conflict. We will focus our learning on various contexts as contested spaces for social change and transformation regarding issues of violence, oppression, injustice, development, and difference. We will focus and ground ourselves in Conflict Transformation’s foundation of peace by peaceful means’. Drawing on Lederach’s idea that Conflict Transformation is a way of “looking and seeing” conflicts; we will explore multiple theories and models that explore conflicts in different settings and identify approaches to positive and sustainable change with a social justice lens.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to provide students with the necessary foundations to achieve the following objectives:

- Understand various theoretical frameworks and models of analysis prevalent in conflict transformation,
- Transform the way we think and engage about conflict,
- Utilize personal experience (a way of doing) as a way of knowing conflict transformation;
- Focus on the processes of peacebuilding and conflict transformation, by always modeling in our class community the type of local, national, and international society for which we strive;
- Improve students’ critical and analytical thinking, presentation, dialogue, collaboration, and writing skills.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students will have:

- Expanded their understanding of the etiologies and conceptualizations of conflict, justice, and peace;
- Finished a transformation project including a literature review, proposal, and public presentation;
- Developed skills to apply theory to practice.
- Reflected on their roles and goals in the creation and sustenance of peaceful communities.

Required Text

1. Lederach, Paul (2014) *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*. New York: Good Books. (Provided by the instructor).

Suggested (not required) course Materials

1. Davis, Angela (2003) “Are Prisons Obsolete?” New York: Seven Stories Press.
2. Freire, Paulo (2002) “Pedagogy of the Oppressed” 30th Anni. Ed, Bloomsbury Press.
3. Kapuscinski, Ryszard (2008) “The Other” Brooklyn, NY: Verso.
4. Toews, Barb (2006) “The Little Book of Restorative Justice for People in Prison” PA: Good Books.
5. Bornstein, David (2004) “How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas”, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
6. Berreby, David (2005) “Us and Them, the Science of Identity”, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
7. Alexander, Michelle (2010) “The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness”, New York: The New Press.
8. Polman, Linda (2011) “The Crisis Caravan, What is Wrong with Humanitarian Aid”, Picador.
9. Roger Fisher, William Ury and Bruce Patton (2011) “Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In”, Penguin Books.

Assessment

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

1. Critical Thinking Papers – 2 X 10	20
2. Conflict Mapping	30
3. Conflict Mapping Presentation	10
4. Reflective paper	30
5. <u>Participation</u>	<u>10</u>
TOTAL	100

A: 100-95, A-: 94-90, B+: 89-85, B: 84-80, B-: 79-75, C+: 74-70, C: 69-65, C-:64-60, D: 59-55, D-:54-50, F: 50 below

Critical Thinking Papers

Students will submit two critical thinking papers answering questions, or responding to materials pertinent to the field of conflict transformation 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, APA—note that this excludes the MLA). Required length is 4-6 pages, double spaced, 12-point font, plus a “Sources Cited” section.

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 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 10-12 double-spaced pages, double spaced, 12-point font, plus a “Sources Cited” section. Additional detailed information on the various sections of the mapping exercise will be provided in class. 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.

Reflective Paper

Reflective papers (5 pages, double spaced, 12-point font, plus a “Sources Cited” section) will explore the concept of human suffering from an individual reflective lens. We will contextualize the concept of “suffering” and reflect on its meaning, responses and responsibility. Using class readings and reflections papers will explore current discourses regarding migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as the implications of the various possible responses to their plight at individual moral level as well as collective interventions by systems and states.

Readings, 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. 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.

Citation Policy, Submission of Assignments and Academic Integrity

A citation acknowledges another person's ideas and adds integrity and foundation to your own. Clarification on what constitutes plagiarism can be found at:

<http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53377.html>

Georgetown University operates on an honor system. Instructors are similarly obligated to uphold this honor system, and required to report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty.

<http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/>

All written assignments are to be handed in to the instructor, in class, on the day they are due. Assignments sent by email, left in my mailbox, under my office door, or placed anywhere other than personally handed to me will not be graded. Five points will be deducted for each day the assignment is submitted late, including weekends, unless there is a reasonable justification for it.

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.

Course Schedule, Readings and Assignments

Week 1 (Jan 15) - Introduction to the Course – Foundational Concepts

Week 2 (Jan 22) – Conflict Transformation and the Emergence of the Human Rights Regime

Read:

- Syllabus overview and expectations.
- Class notes

Watch:

- Ted Talk: *The Danger of Silence*, Clint Smith.

https://www.ted.com/talks/clint_smith_the_danger_of_silence?language=en

Week 3 (Jan 29) - Humanitarian Aid, Responsibility and Transformation

Read:

- Refugees and the Transformation of Societies, Chapters 1, 4, 7.
- Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, available at:
http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/o_c_ref.htm
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, available at:
http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/m_mwctoc.htm

Week 4 (Feb 5) - Understanding Conflict, Resolution and Transformation

Read:

- Pruitt Dean. *Social Conflict, Escalation, Stalemate and Settlement*, 2003, Pages: 3-14.
- Lederach John. *Conflict Transformation*, Beyond Intractability, Oct 2003.
<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/transformation>
- Fisher, Roger. *Getting to Yes*, Introduction, Chapters 1, 3.

- Conflict Resolution vs. Conflict Transformation
<http://02e1cd2.netsolhost.com/wordpressDE/2010/12/03/conflict-resolution-or-conflict-transformation/>
- Suvedi, Mukti. *Understanding Basic Human Needs Theory Relating with Conflict in Nepal*.

Watch:

- Ted Talk: *The Walk from No to Yes*, William Ury.
https://www.ted.com/talks/william_ury

Week 5 (Feb 12) - Refugees and Borders: A Transformation

Read:

- Linda Polman. *The Human Cargo, A Journey Among Refugees*, Pages 1-36
- Defining Humanitarian Assistance, <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/data-guides/defining-humanitarian-aid>
- Philip Gourevitch, Alms Dealers, Can you Provide Humanitarian Aid without facilitating Conflicts? *The New Yorker*, October 11, 2010
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/10/11/alms-dealers>
- Zach Dawes, "Humanitarian Aid Efforts Often Overlook Migrants in Crisis", *Ethicsdaily.com*, July 2, 2015.

Critical Thinking Paper I due Feb 12

Week 6 (Feb 19) - Identity and Intergroup Conflict

Read:

- Kapuscinski, Ryszard. *The Other* (Pages 1-39).
- Berreby, David. *Us and Them, the Science of Identity*, Preface and Pages: 157-182.
- John Kehoe. *Ubuntu, African Wisdom on How to be a Human Being*.

Week 7 (Feb 26) - Peacebuilding and Reconciliation

Read:

- Lederach, Paul. *Building Peace and Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*
- [Cori Wielenga. Comparing Approaches to Reconciliation in South Africa and Rwanda, Conflict Trends](#)
- [Peacebuilding and Reconciliation](#).
- [Ronald Slye. The Great Debate, A Truth and Reconciliation Commission for the United States, Reuters, Aug 10, 2015.](#)
- [Fania Davis, Truth and Reconciliation is Coming to America from the Grass Roots, The Guardian, 26th Feb, 2015.](#)

Watch:

- [Wabanaki Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) (YouTube)
- [As We Forgive](#). Laura Waters Hinson. <http://asweforgivemovie.com/>

Week 8 (March 5) – SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS!!

Week 9 (March 12) - Education and Social Change

Read:

- Freire, P. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Introduction, Forward, Preface, Chapters 1 and 2.
- Freire, P. and Horton, M. Introduction and Chapter 5.

Critical Thinking Paper II due March 12

Week 10 (March 19) - Transitional and Restorative Justice

Read:

- Toews, Barb. (2006) *The Little Book of Restorative Justice for People in Prison* (read entire book, its short)

Watch:

- *Unlikely Friends*, Leslie Neale.

Week 11 (March 26) - Gender Based Violence and Transformation

Read:

- Molly O Toole, The Invisible War Documentary Exposes Military Sexual Assault, The Huffington Post, June 20, 2012.
- Emily Yoffe, "How the Hunting Ground Blurs the Truth", *Slate*, June 1, 2015.

Watch:

- The Hunting Ground¹.
- The Invisible War².

Reflective Paper due March 26

Week 12 (April 2) - The Economics of Peace

Read:

- Bornstein, David, "How to Change the World" (Preface, Intro. & Chapters 1, 7, 15).
- Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, https://www.ashoka.org/social_entrepreneur
- Skoll Foundation: <http://skoll.org/>
- Globalgiving: <https://www.globalgiving.org/>

Week 13 (April 9) – Emerging Trends in Conflict Transformation

Week 13 (April 16) - Student Presentations I

Week 14 (April 23) - Student Presentations II

Conflict Mapping due April 23

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.

¹ Please note that this documentary contains explicit material related to sexual violence.

² Please note that this documentary contains explicit material related to sexual violence.