DESCRIPTION

The goal of this class is to provide you with a broad overview of the interdisciplinary field of conflict analysis and resolution and to help you to develop a framework for diagnosing and responding to conflicts within your own area of interest. The majority of the semester will be devoted to exploring the diverse range of theories of social conflicts found across the social science disciplines. We will also devote some attention to the applied side of conflict studies; that is, the techniques and tools used by practitioners in the field to manage conflicts across different settings and contexts. Of particular interest is uncovering how our theories about the nature of conflicts connect to the conflict management strategies that we adopt. Throughout the semester we will consider how conflict manifests across multiple levels of analysis (inter-group, organizational, and international) as well as across different domains (environmental conflicts, organizational conflicts, intra-state and international conflicts, etc.). At the end of this class, you will be able to 1) analyze social conflicts using multiple, theory-based lenses, 2) understand the array of possible conflict interventions and bases for selection, 3) design and evaluate an intervention, and 4) write a project proposal.

This course fulfills the core course requirement for the Certificate of Advanced Studies in Conflict Resolution and Collaboration.

READING MATERIALS

There is one required book for the course that is available at the SU Bookstore or online:


All other reading materials are on the class Blackboard site.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS

A Typical Week
There will be a good deal of consistency from week to week in this course. Each week will begin with a brief note from me—perhaps highlighting something to look out for in the readings, various reminders, or thoughts about an assignment or theme from the discussion board. I will also outline all work to be completed that week, so that you can have yet another form of assurance that you are on task and up-to-date with your coursework.
Each week, you will be asked to complete a variety of readings—posted within the week’s module as PDFs, but also from your core text. Most weeks, you will also be asked to watch a video of about an hour’s length (often a lecture given to this class in years prior, by a variety of illustrious guests) and review a “lecture”—usually in the form of a powerpoint presentation. You will be asked to respond to the readings/films/lecture through participating in our course discussion board (DB), which will ask you to thoughtfully engage with the readings/ideas presented. In addition to composing your own responses, you will be asked to respond to at least two of your peers’ posts.

At the same time, you should be working on your own paper. The paper is due in sections, with your paper proposal being due during the third week of class. Failing to keep up with the paper will make it impossible to complete this course with a passing grade.

This syllabus is a road map through this course. However, you can access everything—readings, videos, places to submit assignments—in each week’s module. Through that site, you can submit assignments, navigate to the DB, watch the videos… everything. Scrolling through the module is a also good way to “double check” that you have completed everything required of you for the week. Because of its structure, it will be difficult for you to stray very far from the “timing” of the course. With certain assignments, it will be possible to work ahead—but the DB will be closed each Wednesday/Friday by midnight, and you will not be able to earn points for missed posts in another way.

**GRADED ASSESSMENTS**

1. **Research Paper: 50% of final grade (50 points)**

Each student will select a conflict to analyze across the semester. Different parts of the paper are due at different points in the semester (see schedule below). Guidelines for this research paper are available at the end of this syllabus.

3. **Class Participation: 50% of final grade**

The class participation portion of your grade will be based on your thoughtful participation in graded discussion board conversations. These discussions will ask you to seriously engage with course materials, including readings and videos, to both prove your familiarity with the concepts presented and to apply these concepts to your own research (4 pts each, due by Wednesday at 11:59 each week). You will also be asked to respond to responses posted by at least two of your classmates each week (1 pt each, due by Friday at 11:59pm).

Most weeks, I will ask you to respond to two or three questions about the week’s material. Responses will be graded as follows:

* 4 points: thoughtful response to question, citing both course material and external resources
* 3 points: thoughtful response to question, citing course material
* 2 points: thoughtful response to question
* 1 point: response to question

Some weeks, this format will vary slightly, and I will ask you to respond with more depth (and length) to only one discussion board question (that will read more like a short essay and will *not*
require peer response) or to meet and talk with another student about a particular topic. These assignments will be weighted more heavily—counting for two or three “regular” discussion board responses (i.e., 8-12 points each).

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

It is your responsibility to ensure that your participation in this course complies with the terms of the Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy. See: [http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/uploads/docs/SU%20AI%20Policies%20Procedures.pdf](http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/uploads/docs/SU%20AI%20Policies%20Procedures.pdf)

Violations of this policy can result in a failing grade, suspension, or expulsion from the university. Plagiarism is defined at SU as the representation of another’s words, ideas, programs, formulae, opinions, or other products of work as one's own, either overtly or by failing to attribute them to their true source" (Syracuse University Bulletin 2003-2004: p. 2).

**FAITH TRADITION OBSERVANCES**

Syracuse University does not observe religious holidays. Students must notify instructors by the end of the second week of classes when/if they will be observing their religious holiday(s). SU’s religious observances policy, found at [http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm](http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm),

**DISABILITY SERVICES AND ACCOMMODATION**

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), [http://disabilityservices.syr.edu](http://disabilityservices.syr.edu), located at 804 University Avenue, room 309, or call 315-443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities “Accommodation Authorization Letters,” as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

Students must be able to open, send, and produce word documents (word, PDF....), use applications such as Adobe Connect and Skype, open and view Powerpoint presentations, and watch media of various kinds. If you have any questions or need any support, please contact ITS, [help@syr.edu](mailto:help@syr.edu) or 315-443-2677. If you are unable to play the YouTube videos, find your internet browser below and follow the provided link.

In Internet Explorer: [https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/kb/2532294](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/kb/2532294)

In Safari: [https://discussions.apple.com/thread/3654551?tstart=0](https://discussions.apple.com/thread/3654551?tstart=0)

In Google Chrome: [https://support.google.com/chrome/answer/6138475?hl=en](https://support.google.com/chrome/answer/6138475?hl=en)

In Mozilla: [https://support.mozilla.org/en-US/questions/946562](https://support.mozilla.org/en-US/questions/946562)
SCHEDULE

*Important Note: Readings are to be completed during the week that they are assigned.*

**Week of January 17th, 2017**

**Foundational Ideas in Conflict Studies**

In-person session with Catherine Gerard, January 17th, 5:15pm – 8:00, Eggers 060, Global Collaboratory

**READING**
1. Tidwell (1998) Ch.3 "Assumptions and Meanings in Conflict" in *Conflict Resolved?*
2. Tidwell (1998) Ch. 4 "Theories and Theories in Conflict Resolution" in *Conflict Resolved?*
3. Kriesberg and Dayton Ch. 1 "Analyzing Social Conflicts" in *Constructive Conflicts*
4. Kriesberg and Dayton Ch. 2 "Bases of Social Conflicts"

**VIDEO** (Martin Indyk)
**LECTURE** (in person with Dr. Gerard)
**DISCUSSION BOARD**
**ASSIGNMENT:** *Conflict Philosophy*

**Week of January 24**

**Conflict Dynamics: Strategies, Tactics, Escalation and De-Escalation**

**READING**
5. Kriesberg and Dayton (2012). Chapter 7 “The De-escalation of Conflicts”, in *Constructive Conflicts*

**VIDEO** (Peter Coleman)
**LECTURE** (Strategy and Tactics)
**DISCUSSION BOARD**
**ASSIGNMENT:** *Conflict Style Survey*
**Week of January 31**

Drivers of Social Conflict: An Interdisciplinary Framework

READING

1. Kriesberg and Dayton Ch. 3 "The Emergence of Conflicts", Ch. 4 “Alternative Conflict Strategies”, Ch. 5 "Adopting Conflict Strategies", Ch. 11 “Synthesis, Specifications, and Challenges”
2. Begin research for your Research Paper: Earnestly start learning about the conflict you have chosen to write about, thinking about it in terms of Kreisberg and Dayton/the conflict transformation framework we have introduced.

VIDEO (Bruce Dayton)
LECTURE (Drivers of Conflict)
DISCUSSION BOARD
ASSIGNMENT: Paper Proposal

**Research Paper Proposal** (Due Feb 3): One page proposal on the conflict that you would like to research across the semester. This proposal should: 1) name the conflict you intend to research; 2) provide a description of the people or groups that are involved in the conflict (who); 2) explain what their objectives are and how these objectives are incompatible (what are they fighting over); 3) explain how that incompatibility has become manifest (how has their fight become visible?). Look through the “conflict management resources and links” page, and read model papers posted there, if you are not sure about what topic to select.

**Week of February 6**

Cognitive Drivers of Conflict: Framing

READING:

**Week of February 13**

**Cognitive Drivers: Identity**

**READING:**

3. Read the following essays from the University of Colorado’s ‘Beyond Intractability’ website:
   - Stereotyping: [http://www.beyonandintractability.org/bi-essay/stereotypes](http://www.beyonandintractability.org/bi-essay/stereotypes)

**Week of February 20**

**Emotional Drivers**

**READING:**

Week of February 27
Structural Drivers

READING:
3. Global Peace Index data: Familiarize yourself with the INDICATORS used to compile the annual Global Peace Index. Interactive map found at: http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/indexes/global-peace-index

VIDEO (various)
LECTURE (structural drivers)
DISCUSSION BOARD

Week of March 6
Interest-based Drivers

READINGS:

LECTURE (Interest-based approaches)
DISCUSSION BOARD

Week of March 13—Spring Break

Week of March 20
Cognitive Interventions: “ReFraming”

READING
1. Track II Diplomacy http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/track2-diplomacy

LECTURE (Peacebuilding)
DISCUSSION BOARD
**Week of March 27**

**Cognitive Interventions: Identity**

**READING**


**DISCUSSION BOARD**

**Research Paper: Analysis of Conflict Drivers Due by midnight, March 31 (30% of final paper grade)**

**Week of April 3**

**Emotional Interventions**


**VIDEOS (Craddock, Crane Truth Commissions)**

**DISCUSSION BOARD**

**Week of April 10**

**Structural Interventions: Nonviolent Social Movements**

**READING**


**VIDEOS (“Bringing Down a Dictator” and John Burdick lecture)**

**DISCUSSION BOARD**
**Week of April 17**

**Intervention: Negotiations and Competing Interests**

**READING:**
1. Ury, Brett and Goldberg, *Getting Disputes Resolved*, Chapters 1, 3 & 8
3. Kriesberg & Dayton Ch. 8 “Mediation in Conflicts”, in *Constructive Conflicts*
4. Kriesberg & Dayton Ch. 9 “Settling Conflicts through Negotiated and Nonnegotiated Means” in *Constructive Conflicts*

**VIDEO** (James Steinberg)

**DISCUSSION BOARD**

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**Week of April 24**

**Theories of Change and Evaluating Conflict Management Practice**

**READING:**
4. USIP chapter 2, “Conflict Analysis.”

**LECTURE** (Theory of Change)

**DISCUSSION BOARD**

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**Week of May 1-8**

**VIDEO** (Lou Kriesberg)

**RESEARCH Paper Due!! Use the Turnitin feature on Blackboard. The paper is due by midnight on May 8th.**
Conflict Analysis and Transformation Research Paper  
Fundamentals of Conflict Studies, Spring 2017

IMPORTANT DUE DATES

- February 3: Research paper proposal due.
- February 17: Draft of Background Section (see below) due (10% of overall paper grade).
- March 31: Draft of Analysis of Conflict Drivers section due (30% of overall paper grade).
- May 8: Completed paper (cover letter, revised background, revised analysis of conflict drivers, research on interventions and final section on Project Goals and Activities). Due by midnight using the Turnitin feature on Blackboard. (60% of overall paper grade).

GET STARTED

Pick a current conflict that you are interested in analyzing. This conflict can revolve around any topical area other than an interpersonal dispute. For instance, an environmental conflict; an organizational / workplace conflict; a violent civil war, a labor-management dispute; a conflict over a particular public policy concern; a conflict revolving around ethnic, racial, or religious differences; an international conflict, etc. Just remember that conflicts are defined as situations where:

- two or more persons or groups
- manifest the belief
- that they have incompatible objectives” (from Kriesberg & Dayton, Chapter 1).

SCENARIO

This research project imagines that you are seeking funding from a foundation, government agency, or other member of the donor community for a conflict management project that your organization (real or imaginary) will carry out. Your final research paper should, therefore, come in the form of a proposal consisting of four parts:

PAPER SECTIONS

1. COVER LETTER

A one-page cover letter that introduces your organization, very briefly outlines the conflict that you are addressing and introduces your project. (This will be prepared as part of the final paper.)
2. BACKGROUND

Provide a background of the conflict that includes the following:

1. What conflict are you addressing?
2. Conflict timeline: When, where? What are the milestones? What stage is the conflict currently at?
3. Overview of stakeholders: a) Who are the major stakeholders (individuals, groups, organizations, countries, etc.)?; b) What does each stakeholder group want (their positions) and how are these positions incompatible?; c) How has their perceived incompatibility become manifest / visible?

3. ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT DRIVERS

Review the theoretical approaches to social conflicts reviewed during the semester.

a. Analyze the conflict using all four drivers.
b. Select / name the driver or drivers that you think best explains the emergence and escalation (and de-escalation, if that has occurred) of the conflict you are researching.
c. Explain, using evidence, why you believe this / these drivers offer the greatest utility in helping the observer to understand the conflict’s emergence, escalation (de-escalation if that occurred).

(To get credit for this section of the paper you must convincingly reference specific course readings, theories and other ideas from the course in making your argument. In other words, convince the reader that you know the relevant literature.)

4. ANALYSIS OF INTERVENTION FROM RESEARCH

- Which interventions flow from the driver/s you have selected above?
- What successful interventions have practitioners used to approach comparable conflicts? How are these relevant to your project?

5. THEORY OF CHANGE, PROJECT GOALS, AND ACTIVITIES

- What is your theory of change?
- What are the specific goal of your project?
- Why are these goals the most reasonable ones to seek at this point in time as opposed to other things you might do?
- Provide a detailed description of your proposed project (activities, participants, methods, duration, location, etc.). The reader should be able to understand exactly
what you plan on doing, who you will do it with, when you will do it, and how you will do it.

- What are the expected outcomes of your project? In other words, what specifically will change as a result of your project and how will this change achieve the goals you discussed above?
- How will you evaluate whether or not the project has achieved its intended goals (go back to the theory of change)?

GRADING

Your grade for the paper will include my evaluation of the following:

- Extensive use of the course content (readings and lectures) throughout the paper
- The depth of your research effort
- The creativity of your proposed project
- The degree to which your analysis, goals, project, and expected results are consistent with each other
- Clarity and writing quality

Please look at model papers as exemplars (in “Information”)

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