

INTS 4920
Graduate School of International Studies
Fall Quarter 2014

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Hours: 10 am-2 pm Thurs.
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Conflict and Conflict Resolution

Overview

The Definition of Conflict Resolution adopted in this course centers on non-violent mechanisms, spanning formal and informal interactions and bargaining between disputants to reach solutions. Levels of conflicts are often differentiated by identifying adversaries—countries, ethnic groups, business organizations, neighbors, or individuals (family members or co-workers). We will examine these perspectives to understand various layers where conflicts arise, and to make comparisons across issues and participants noting similarities and contrasts in resolution manner, effort, and achievement.

Conflict is ever-present in Human Relations and often viewed as an important, and indeed, an essential instrument of social change and progress. The late peace activist and scholar, Kenneth Boulding, stated that “The essence of the drama of conflict is its resolution; it is not the conflict as such that makes the drama but the resolution of the conflict as a meaningful process through time. Conflicts that continue without end become mere noise and confusion.”

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Elie Wiesel asserts that “we all know that conflict resolution is a necessity, but whether it is a possibility, that is a different story. It has become an academic discipline, which is encouraging. Naturally, any person who has a sense of civilization must respond to the idea of conflict resolution.”

Conflict Resolution is a Complex Growth-Industry. It has been incorporated to a wide range of academic subjects—law, business, international relations, psychology, communications, and theology—in the past four decades. Within international studies, primary emphasis has been given to peace research, negotiation theory, unofficial diplomacy, and problem-solving workshops. In law, where the term alternative dispute resolution (ADR) originated, it has expanded into mediation and arbitration procedures. In business, negotiation strategies are important in making deals. For psychology, human dimensions of needs and wants are dominant explanations for social conflict and provide insight for resolution.

What characterizes Social Conflict?

- Parties are interdependent—they each need something from the other and they are vulnerable if they do not get it.
- Parties blame each other—they find fault with each other for causing the problem and believe the other side must change.
- Parties are frustrated and/or angry—they feel emotionally upset with the other side and engage in confrontation or passive-aggressive acts.
- Parties' behavior is causing a problem—each side's productivity and performance is directly affected by the lack of cooperation in their relationship.

Course Objectives

1. *To heighten awareness* about conflict and recognize common conflict resolution approaches used in daily life.
2. *To understand* how power, grievance, culture, and identity affect conflict escalation and restrict conflict resolution efforts.
3. *To learn about* various conflict resolution techniques—principles, set-up application, and assessment.
4. *To apply* negotiation tools and problem-solving approaches to real-world settings.

Course Texts

1. Feste, Karen A. *Plans for Peace: Negotiation and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Greenwood Press. 1991.
2. Fisher, Roger and William Ury. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreements without Giving In*. Revised Edition. Penguin Books. 2011.
3. Kriesberg, Louis and Bruce Dayton. *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*. 4th Edition. Rowman and Littlefield. 2012.

4. Mayer, Bernard. *The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution: A Practitioner's Guide*. 2nd Edition. Jossey-Bass. 2012.
5. Rothman, Jay. *Resolving Identity Based Conflict in Nations, Organizations, and Communities*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 1997.
6. Tignait, Pandid Rajmani. *Why we Fight: Practices for Everlasting Peace*. 2nd Edition. Himalayan International Institute. 2003.
7. Wittes, Tamara Cofman. *How Israelis and Palestinians Negotiate: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of the Oslo Peace Process*. United States Institute of Peace. 2005.
8. Yankelovich, Daniel. *The Magic of Dialogue: Transforming Conflict into Cooperation*. Simon and Schuster. 1999.

Course Assignments

Personal Journal: Each student records examples of conflicts they have personally experienced or witnessed—between their friends, with their family, within their community, between countries in a personal journal, including a description, on average, of two conflicts per week. Descriptions should include a resolution approach, with particular application of course techniques.

Deadline:	September 30 & October 1; November 11 & 12.
Paper Length:	no limit
Grade contribution:	20%.

Major Practical Exercise: Each student participates in a role playing negotiation simulation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where the primary task is to become familiar with current policies and develop mutually agreeable proposals to resolve issues. Students are organized into official representation groups and create two written documents in advance: (1) An Open document stating general goals and specific proposals on selected problems; and (2) A Secret document of contingency plans for reasonable compromises, and Principled Negotiation and Rational Choice negotiation strategies for bargaining on specific proposals. Open documents distributed to all participating organization teams in class on due date. Secret documents distributed to course instructor only at simulation onset. Team assignments and simulation description distributed October 7 and 8 in class. Simulation Session: 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Saturday, November 8 (Tues) and Sunday, November 9 (Wed).

Deadlines:	Open document: October 28 & 29; Secret Document: Nov 8 & 9.
Paper Length:	Open document: 5 pp <i>minimum</i> ; Secret document 8 pp <i>maximum</i>
Grade Contribution:	40%

Four Brief Con Res Technique Applications: each student, taking the role of a mediator or facilitator, prepares a short description and set-up to apply each technique covered in this course to particular scenarios (distributed in class at first meeting), organizing the application contents under the following headers: (A) The essence of the technique (the assumptions, principles, and operation of the approach); and (B) for each of 2 conflict scenarios outline: (1) Participants and Venue; (2) Goals of the session; and (3) Process (how you would guide the session); (4) Objections (why it might fail); and (5) Solving Objections (how it might succeed).

Deadline:	weeks of discussed technique
Paper Length:	5 pp. max per technique application
Grade contribution:	10% per technique application on the 3 conflicts (40% total)

Grading Criteria

Everyone should perform at a good level, so distinctions are made only for very top grades:

- A high level performance showing excellent reasoning, insightful analytic ability presented clearly and precisely.
- A- Very close, but not quite A level.
- B+ Sound thinking, good reasoning, not insightful or as clearly expressed as in A level work.
- B Sound thinking, moderately good reasoning, not insightful, may lack argument or clarity of expression
- B- Inadequate or insufficient reasoning or expression.

Class Organization

During the Seminar Sessions, a lecture format will apply during weeks 1-4, with time for questions and answers, but little discussion, as we have a lot of material to cover. During weeks 5-9, following a portion of lecture, a common format will be used to discuss each of the conflict resolution techniques in weeks. Among the questions to be raised: What is essence of the approach? What is the role of power, grievance, culture and identity within the approach? When are parties willing to negotiate? What constitutes success and failure? What are the main principles of conflict resolution within the approach? Please be prepared to discuss these points. Week 10, the simulation debriefing will consist of a general discussion.

Detailed Description of Class Assignments will be given to the class at the first meeting, and one week before each of the different assignments is due (i.e. the short conflict resolution applications will be described in detail, with time for Q&A the week before). Private discussions during my office hours, or email messages on the assignments may be arranged only *after* the class description session. I want to be certain that everyone has access to the same information at the same time, so no one is privy to extra information beforehand.

A Weekly Workshop-Discussion for anyone seeking clarification on class topics and wish to discuss class materials (readings and lectures) further, has been set up every Wednesday, 5-6 p.m. for students in both sections of the Con Res Seminar. It will be held in my office, Room 217. Feel free to bring your questions and concerns.

Average Expected Workload for the Seminar is about 8-10 hours per week outside of class for reading, thinking, writing, negotiating. Some weeks the expected and actual hours of commitment might be higher; at other times, it could be lower. The class meets for 3 hours per week for 10 weeks + the 8 hour simulation + simulation team meetings and preparations. Based on this calculated norm, a student enrolled in 3 equivalent graduate seminars during an academic term is working about the same as a full-time 40 hour per week job.

It is assumed that everyone will complete all of the readings and the assignments on a weekly basis. The success of the seminar depends on full commitment.

Important Classroom Policies

The use of *cell phones*, blackberry, ipods – not permitted during the seminar period. Please disengage before entering classroom.

The use of *laptop computers* -- not permitted during the seminar period. Lecture outlines distributed in class; note-taking in longhand.

Sitting at the Table – is required, a Conflict Resolution mantra

All *written assignments*: please use 12 point font; 1-inch margins.

Session Topics and Readings

Session 1
Sept 9 & 10

Conflict & Conflict Resolution: Basic Theory

Session 2
Sept 16 & 17

Conflict Sources: Power and Grievance

Kriesberg and Dayton, *Constructive Conflicts*, chapters 1-4
Mayer, *The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution*, chapters 1-3

Session 3
Sept 23 & 24

Conflict Sources: Culture and Identity

Kriesberg and Dayton, *Constructive Conflicts*, chapters 5-7
Mayer, *The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution*, chapter 4
Cohen, Raymond. *Negotiating Across Cultures*. Revised Edition. Chapter 2-5, 10.

Session 4
Sept 30 & Oct 1

Conflict Case Study: The Israeli-Palestinian Dispute

Feste, Karen A. *Plans for Peace: Negotiation and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. entire.
Wittes, Tamara Cofman. *How Israelis and Palestinians Negotiate* 2005. entire.

- 1st Personal Journal Submission Due

Session 5
Oct 7 & 8

Conflict Resolution Approach: Rational Choice

Fisher and Ury. *Getting to Yes*. pp. 3-14
Mayer, Bernard, *The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution*. Chapters 5-8.
Lebow, Richard Ned. *The Art of Bargaining*. Chapters 2,3, 9

- 1st Con Res Technique Application Due
- Simulation Description and Teams Distributed

Session 6
Oct 14 & 15

Conflict Resolution Approach: Principled Bargaining

Fisher and Ury, *Getting to Yes*. Entire.

- 2nd Con Res Technique Application Due

Session 7
Oct 21 & 22

Conflict Resolution Approach: Dialogue

Yankelovich, Daniel. *The Magic of Dialogue*. Chapters 1-11.

- 3rd Con Res Technique Application Due

Session 8
Oct 28 & 29

Conflict Resolution Approach: Problem Solving

Rothman, Jay. *Resolving Identity Based Conflict in Nations, Organizations, and Communities*. Chapters 1-6.

- 4th Con Res Technique Application Due
- Simulation Open Documents Due

Session 9
Nov 4 & 5

Conflict Resolution Approach: Collective Consciousness

Tigunait, Pandit Rajmani. *Why we Fight*. Entire.

Mayer, B. *The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution*. Chapter 9-11.

Special Extra Session: The Simulation Game

Nov 8 & 9

Saturday & Sunday 10 – 6 (one day for each class)

Tuesday session meets Saturday

Wednesday session meets Sunday

- Simulation Secret Documents Due

Session 10
Nov 11 & 12

Simulation Debriefing

- Final Personal Journal Submission Due