UNDERSTANDING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF CONFLICT

Introduction: Genealogy of Conflict Resolution

The field of conflict resolution has evolved dramatically during the relatively short duration of the discipline’s existence. Each generation of scholars has struggled with the major puzzles of their era, providing theories and solutions that met the needs of the time, only to be pushed forward by new insights and, at times, totally upended by a changing world.

This introductory course explores the genealogy of the field of conflict resolution by examining three different epochs of the field, each one tied to the historical context and events of the day. In each of these epochs, scholars and practitioners worked to understand and address the conflicts that the world was facing, at that time. These three stages build on each other and constitute what we know today as the field of conflict resolution.

To make the history of this development accessible, the reader associated to this course is divided into three main parts. Each part addresses the central challenge, or puzzle faced by the generation of scholars and practitioners. Questions at the end of each essay allow the students to grapple along with these scholars, seeing how the solutions put forth address the conflicts yet inevitably leave important questions unanswered. From this perspective we will explore the possibilities and limitations of each epoch.

Essays have been chosen for how they address conflict within a wide range of settings include peace-building, post-conflict, international policy, organizational behavior, non-violence, justice and other literatures. In this way students will explore the “problem and solution sets” associated to each epoch, intersected by readings that explore different domains that include organizational conflicts, community, ethnic, policy, post-conflict/justice, peacebuilding, and development.
Additionally, readings were chosen to ensure that we will explore theory, practice, as well as research methods. As each of these epoch as its own agenda, its own zeitgeist, there is a fit that emerges between the theories that are developed, the nature of the practices that emerge, and the research method that undergird the development of both theory and practice. Seeing the epoch as a set of puzzles from which theories, practices and research methods emerged will enable students to see the development of the field as a set of storylines that have their own coherencies.

**Course Requirements**

**I. Attendance Policy and Class Participation**

Students are expected to attend classes regularly—no more than 3 unexcused absences, arrive on time, and be prepared to make substantive contributions to class discussions and actively engage in class activities. For each unexcused absence beyond 3, I will deduct 5 points from your participation grade. Missing more than 8 classes will result in an F in the class. This course is designed to be interactive and experiential and relies heavily on in-class assignments: activities and simulations will be conducted each week. Absences will seriously affect your grade. A plane ticket home does not qualify as an emergency or excused absence. However, if you are sick, or have an emergency and you know you are going to be absent, please inform me as soon as possible. Some in-class activities simply cannot be made up. If you believe attendance will be a problem, this is not an ideal course for you.

**Technology:** NO use of cell phones in class. If your cell phone is out, whether you are actively using it or not, you will receive a 5% deduction off your final participation grade. Laptops and tablets may be used, but if you are on any website (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) that is not appropriate to the course, you will receive a 5 point deduction off your final participation grade.

**II. Reading Assignments**

An introductory study of any kind can be complex, confusing and abstract at first. We are in many cases, learning a new language. Given this, it is essential that students keep up with the assigned readings as outlined in the schedule of classes below. **I expect the assigned reading to be completed prior to class the day it is assigned.** This way you will be able to better comprehend the lecture, get more from the in-class activities, and ask questions if doubt or confusion persists.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

This course is highly participatory and students are expected to demonstrate their understanding of the readings over the course of the semester in various ways. Different from the traditional “introductory” course, we spend much of our time
talking about the readings, their strength and limitations, and what we can learn from the readings about the development of the field.

**Participation- 20%**

“Participation” in class refers to engagement with others, in discussion, raising questions, making comments, working with the readings directly, and offering opinions.

Students will be assigned groups and will be responsible for providing a review of the articles for that week based on the template questions that will be provided at the beginning of class. Students are expected to be able to respond to the questions provided during any given class session.

**Reflection Paper- Experiential Learning Activity 15% [Oct 17]**

**Epoch Summaries/Analyses:**

- EPOCH #1- 15% Critical Analyses [Sept 19]
- EPOCH# 2- 20% Template Questions for 5 articles [Nov 3]
- EPOCH# 3- 30% Epoch Analyses Paper 6-8pgs OR Conflict Application of Epoch [Dec 14 or in class presentation]

**Epoch 1- Critical Analyses:** These summaries and analyses are intended to demonstrate that you read the material and can critique it. Here are the guidelines:

1. Identify the reading.
2. Identify what you think is the core idea of the paper.
3. Identify 2 related, supporting points made in the paper, connected to the core idea.
4. Name and discuss 2-3 limitations and 2-3 strengths of the paper, as you see it and why.
5. How does this article, approach, or method relate back to the puzzles of epoch 1?

*1-2 pages on each article you choose

**Epoch 2-** Answer the template questions for 5 articles. You will then have to explain your answers to other classmate from outside of your group and you will submit
your answers with feedback on each one. This is like a peer review. We can discuss this further when we wrap up Epoch 1.

**Epoch 3**- Building on the analyses from the first two epochs you can choose to write a final paper of 6-8 pages doing a comparative analysis of the epochs demonstrating how each epoch builds on the one previously and providing the strengths and weakness of each one. Your analysis of the third epoch will demonstrate your understanding of the puzzles of the time and what the aims were of the theories, practices, and research methods in addressing those puzzles. **OR** you can choose a contemporary conflict and do an analysis of that conflict based the epochs – choosing which one most applies and presenting your analysis to me in video form. The presentation will be 12-15 minutes in length. This second approach of choosing a contemporary conflict may also be used for your final papers should you choose to write instead of present.

**Final Paper Evaluation**
- Excellent (A: 90-100): This paper captures accurately the central ideas in the epoch readings, but it also makes excellent points, in terms of the strengths and limitations of the reading, relative to the epoch which it addresses.
- Good (B: 80-89): This paper accurately captures the central ideas in the epoch readings, but the section on limitations and strengths is weak.
- Satisfactory (C: 70-79): This paper makes an effort to represent the core ideas in the epoch readings but does not satisfactorily address the strengths and limitations.

Papers will also be graded on the following:
- Argumentation/structure
- Content
- Use of the course reading materials.

**Final Presentation Evaluation**
- Excellent (A: 90-100): This presentation captures accurately the central ideas in the epoch readings and how it relates to the chosen conflict. It also makes excellent points, in terms of the strengths and limitations of the approach, relative to the conflict which it addresses.
- Good (B: 80-89): This presentation accurately captures the central ideas in the epoch readings, but is limited in the strength of its application to the conflict.
- Satisfactory (C: 70-79): This presentation makes an effort to represent the core ideas in the epoch readings but does not satisfactorily address the chosen conflict.

**Grading Policy**

Attendance/Participation...........20%
Experiential Learning Paper ..........15%
Epoch 1 Analyses .......................15%
Epoch 2 Analyses .......................20%
Epoch 3 Analyses .......................30%
Total ......................................100%

Grading

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University Policies

**Cheating, Plagiarism and Fabrication:** Cheating (using unauthorized materials or giving unauthorized assistance during an examination or other academic exercise), Plagiarism (the use of someone else’s ideas without clear acknowledgement), and Fabrication (the intentional falsification or invention of information) are serious academic offences that may result in a failing grade for the particular assignment, for the course, or in suspension or expulsion from the university. Just don’t do it.

**The Honor Code:** All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html) and at [http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/](http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/).

**Disabilities:** If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

**Religious Observances:** Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who,
because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. In this class, I ask that you contact me at least one week ahead of the date(s) that you will be absent so that we can discuss any assignments/class material that you will miss.

**Classroom Behavior:** Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

**Discrimination and Harassment:** The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at [http://www.colorado.edu/odh](http://www.colorado.edu/odh).
COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1- August 22, 24, 26 Introductions/Syllabus/Semester Overview

Reading:

- Warfare as an Invention
  Nordstrom: Deadly Myths of Aggression
  Nordstrom: Habitus
  Mead: Warfare is Only an Invention

Introduction to Epoch #1

EPOCH #1: 1945- FALL OF BERLIN WALL

Avoiding Annihilation by Understanding The Root Causes of War and Peace

Topics

Week 2- August 29, 31, September 2 -Root causes (Human nature, psychological)

Reading:

- Human Needs
  Burton: Violence Explained: Needs Theory

- Greed and Grievance
  Collier: Economic Causes of Conflict and their Implications for Policy

- Aggression
  Barash and Webel: The Individual Level

- Structural Violence
  Galtung (Promotion of Peace)

Week 3 – September 7, 9 Tactics/Strategies/Practices/Approaches

Reading:

- Negotiation
  Thompson: Negotiation: The Mind and Heart
• Alternative Dispute Resolution: (ADR)
  Sander: Alternative Methods of Dispute Resolution

• Problem Solving Workshops
  Kelman: Evaluating Contributions of Problem Solving to the Resolution of Ethnonational Conflict

**Week 4 – September 12, 14, 16- Research Methodology**

**Reading:**

• Global Peace Index 2014
  Suggested: Global Terrorism Index

• Failed States- Goldstone: Failed states

• Negotiation research
  Irman and Druckman: “Explaining Negotiation Outcomes: Process or Context?”

**Week 5 September 19 - REVIEW EPOCH 1**

**September 21, 23 - Introduction to Epoch #2**

**EPOCH #2 COEXISTENCE AS PEACE**

(EPOCH #1 SUMMARIES DUE, SEPTEMBER 19th, 11:59pm)

**Reading:**

• Identity
  Korostelina: Social Identity and Conflict: Structures, Dynamics, and Implications. (Chapter 9)

• Culture
  Avruch: Culture and Conflict Resolution

**Week 6 - September 26, 28, 30 Topics: Identity and Culture**

**Reading:**

• Gender
Cheldelin & Eliatamby: Challenging the Dominant Narrative (Women Waging War and Peace)


- Religion
  Gopin: Imagine Coexistence: Religion as an Aid and a Hindrance to Post-conflict Coexistence Work

**Week 7 – October 3, 5, 7 - Topics: Moral Values and Intractable Conflict**

**Reading:**

- Moral Conflict
  Pearce and Littlejohn: When Social Worlds Collide

- Intractable Conflict
  Coleman: Intractable Conflict as an Attractor: A Dynamical Systems Approach to Conflict Escalation and Intractability

- Chosen Trauma
  Volkan: Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas: An Aspect of Large-Group Identity.

**EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITY: MEDIATED PERCEPTIONS**

**Week 8 – October 10, 12, 14 - Tactics/Strategies/Practices/Approaches (10/17 *REFLECTION PAPER DUE)**

**Reading:**

- Emotion
  Fischer and Shapiro: Using Emotions as You Negotiate

- Mediation
  Curle: Mediation

- Appreciative Inquiry:
  McClellan: Marrying Positive Psychology to Mediation

*Recommended*
• Brown, Juanita: World Café Community- Shaping Our Futures Through Conversations That Matter (Introduction, 1-11)

• Dialogue
  Public Dialogue Projects:
  http://www.publicconversations.org

Week 9 – October 17, 19, 21 – Tactics/Strategies/Practices/Approaches

Reading:

• Truth and Reconciliation

  Recommended:
  Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Greensboro)
  http://greensborotrc.org/exec_summary.pdf
  Truth and Reconciliation Archive (South Africa)
  http://www.saha.org.za/collections.htm
  (Register for a username and password to access)

• Peacebuilding
  Allport: The Effect of Contact

• Lederach: The Elicitive model: Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures. (Chapter 6)

• Non-violence

Week 10 – October 24, 26, 28 - Research methods

  Grounded Theory
  • Demola Akinyoade: Developing Grounded Theory in Peace and Conflict Research

  Ethnography
  • Nordstrom: Prologue (Chapter 1) Shadows of War

Case study
Week 11 – October 31, November 2, 4
Review Epoch # 2

EPOCH #3: VOICE, RIGHTS, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: TRANSITIONS AND TRANSFORMATIONS, LIVING WITHIN THE TENSIONS

Introduction to Epoch #3

(EPOCH #2 SUMMARIES ARE DUE- NOVEMBER 3, 11:59pm)

Topics: Living in the Tensions

Week 12 – November 7, 9, 11- Topics: Power and Marginalization

Reading:

- Power
  Jabri: Discourses on Violence. Conflict Analysis Reconsidered (Introduction)

- Identity
  Nelson: Narrative Repair Reclaiming Moral Agency (Chapter 1: Damaged Identities)

- Enns: Victimhood

Week 13 – November 14, 16, 18- Topic: Politics of Voice

Reading:

- Trauma
  Danieli: Essential Elements of healing after massive trauma: complex needs voiced by victims/survivors

- Gender
  Enloe: Bananas, Beaches, and Bases – Chapter One

- Silence
  Dwyer: A Politics of Silences: Violence, Memory and Treacherous Speech in Post-1965 Bali (research?)
THANKSGIVING BREAK!

Week 14 – November 28, 30, December 2 - Strategies/Practices/Approaches

- Narrative Mediation
  Winslade: Narrative Mediation: What is it?

- Critical Theory
  Hansen: Critical Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice

- Radical Care
  Ginwright: Chapter Two of Black Youth Rising

- Social Media
  Castells: Dignity, Violence and Geopolitics: The Arab Uprisings pg 103-107

  Recommended:
  - Coexistence
    Cobb: Fostering Coexistence in Identity Based Conflicts

Week 15 – December 5, 7, 9 Research

- Participatory Action Research (PAR)
  Bruenlin, Himelstein and Nelson: “Our Stories, Told By Us” The Neighborhood Story Project in New Orleans

- Decolonizing Research
  Simpson: Aboriginal Peoples and Knowledge: Decolonizing our Processes

  Recommended:
  Bishop: Freeing ourselves from neo-colonial domination in research: A Maori Approach to Creating Knowledge

(*EPOCH #3 SUMMARIES DUE DECEMBER 14, 11:59pm)
List of articles and book chapters on D2L:


Hancock, Landon. Prospect theory and the framing of the Good Friday Agreement in Conflict Resolution Quarterly Winter 2010 Vo 28 183-203


Richmond, Oliver P. "Critical research agendas for Peace: The missing link in the study of International relations." Alternatives: Global, Local, Political 32, no. 2 (2007): 247-274.


