

# DRAFT SYLLABUS SPRING 2013

George Mason University

Spring 2013  
PUBP 654.001

## CONFLICT ANALYSIS FOR PEACE OPERATIONS

Tuesdays, 7:20 p.m.-10:00 p.m.  
Room TBD

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**Teaching Assistant:** TBD  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays, 6-7 p.m.

### Course Description

This course examines theories of human behavior and social systems as they relate to conflict at the interpersonal, community, and international levels of conflict. The class is intended to provide a solid foundation of academic thinking about the role of conflict in violent and peaceful social change. At the end of the course, students should be able to think systematically and critically about conflict, and engage in practical application of conflict analysis techniques to peace operations.

### Course Objectives

- Familiarize students with terminology and concepts of the field of conflict analysis
- Help students to think systematically and analytically about conflict in a variety of contexts
- Connect theory to practice through discussion, research and case studies of real events and interventions

### Course Concept

Each student must select a different conflict (or a different issue within the same conflict) and each must pick an organization to research and represent by the second week of class. After that, students will be grouped according to the stage of their conflict as follows:

- Early Warning Group (Latent stage)
- Escalation Group
- Stalemate Group
- Post-conflict Reconstruction Group
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Groups will act as sounding boards for the individuals working their conflict analysis. Each week the group will meet to discuss that week's conflict analysis topic as it relates to their conflict.

You are working for a government or non-government organization as a conflict analyst. Your job is to track a conflict in a particular country to help the senior leadership of the organization decide whether or not to design an intervention. Depending on the role of your organization, you can also choose whether to look at the conflict from an individual, community, national, or international level.

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### ***Your boss has asked you to provide a final conflict analysis on March 19***

You suspect that your boss has asked you to provide the organization's leadership with a comprehensive analysis in order to aid in intervention planning purposes. After your organization reads your conflict assessment, they will ask you to provide your initial thoughts on an intervention strategy based on your assessment.

### ***Your intervention strategy is due April 30***

#### **Course Requirements**

Attendance and participation (15 points): Regular attendance is extremely important. Discussion is critical to student learning and to exhibit that the required reading is being completed. **Missing 4 classes for any reason will result in a failing grade.** Each class that you *attend* is worth 1 point toward your 15 total participation points. This includes preparing responses to discussion questions and helping to carry the discussion and engaging class members in discussions about the assigned readings. You can also participate by asking questions, circulating emails, organizing study groups, exchanging writing, preparing summaries and making class presentations on reading assignments and/or introducing new ideas and resources. Please refer to the attendance policy in the *Class policies and procedures* section.

10 Monday Questions (10 points): Students will be required to post a question or reflection about the class required readings to the discussion board every week. Each question is worth 1 point and is due at noon on Monday so that the professor can review them before class on Tuesday.

Conflict Analysis Paper (40 points): This is your "deliverable" to your boss and should be a comprehensive assessment that includes the following sections:

1. Situation: Conflict issue, main parties and their interests and goals
2. Sources: Possible sources of the conflict
3. Attitudes: Analysis of the parties' conflict attitudes
4. Group mobilization: Culture and identity issues in the groups
5. Escalation: Chosen tactics, potential for escalation, assessment of possible intervention timing.

Reflection Paper (5 Points): Your personal assessment of the usefulness of the SSAGE System. What works, and what doesn't work? What do you wish the system could do that it does not?

Conflict Intervention Plan (30 Points) This should include:

- A suggested theory of change and associated range of possible strategies and outcomes
- A description of possible formal and informal third party intervention techniques
- Selection of one or two intervention techniques and justification for your choice
- Measures of performance and effectiveness for the intervention plan
- Recommendation for data collection to evaluate effectiveness

**Total points possible for the class: 100**

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## Class Policies and Procedures

SPP Policy on Plagiarism (READ CAREFULLY): The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the School of Public Policy. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable. Plagiarism is the use of another's words or ideas presented as one's own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another's work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined. Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one's professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career. The faculty of the School of Public Policy takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of "F." This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student's transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (e.g. F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa. To help enforce the SPP policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The SPP policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it. (<http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html>)

Special needs of students: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

Online student journal: *New Voices in Public Policy*: I will consider nominating the very best papers in this course for publication in *New Voices in Public Policy*. *New Voices* is a student- and faculty-reviewed journal that shares SPP's finest student work with the rest of the world.

Electronics in class. Laptops may be useful to have in class for certain tasks. If you are used to taking notes on your laptop, please feel free. However, please respect the professor and your fellow students and do not abuse your time spent in class playing games, checking email, or surfing the web. If laptops become disruptive, I will ban them for the rest of the semester. Please turn off cell phones and leave them in your backpack. We will have breaks where you can check your phone messages.

Attendance policy: Attendance is critical. **If you miss 4 classes, I will fail you regardless of your grades** on individual written assignments. If you think it likely that you will miss at least 3 classes, you should not take the class. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of absences. There are no excused absences. If you do not attend class, for any reason, you do not get a participation point.

Grading: All papers are due in **ELECTRONIC COPY** at the **BEGINNING** of class. If you are going to be late, it is best to call me and email your paper ahead of time. All papers are graded according to a rubric designed by the instructor. This assists the professor in grading all papers according to the same set of criteria. In general, I have found that students with poor writing skills do poorly in this class. Graduate level prose is required in all papers, including proper citation of sources (see plagiarism policy above). I have also found that students who switch jobs in the middle of the semester also do poorly in the class. This class is very demanding in terms of reading and understanding material that is not a regular part of most undergraduate curriculum. If you receive a "C" on the first paper, you are required to meet with me during office hours either the following week or by appointment within 10 days of receiving the unsatisfactory

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grade to review your paper. Remember that a “C” in the School of Public Policy is considered “unsatisfactory” and two “C” final grades will expel you from the program. It is the student’s responsibility to drop the class before the drop date if they feel they cannot pass the class with a “B” or better. There will be no extra credit assigned or granted to compensate for an unsatisfactory grade received in the class on a regular assignment. It is simply not fair to the rest of the class.

Grading Rubric: The following rubric is used for grading the two main papers.

| Grading Category   | Conflict analysis Paper (40) | Intervention Paper (30) | Grade | Notes |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|
| Appropriate models used from class readings and described well using appropriate citation of sources                           | 10                           | 6                       |       |       |
| Clear, logical argument backed by evidence.  | 20                           | 15                      |       |       |
| Overall flow of paper— Bottom line up front.<br>Well organized utilizing section headers and transition paragraphs, conclusion | 6                            | 5                       |       |       |
| Correct grammar  | 2                            | 2                       |       |       |
| Correct citations  | 2                            | 2                       |       |       |
| Total possible points:   | 40                           | 30                      |       |       |

Emergencies: If an emergency prevents you from attending class, you should let the professor know ahead of time when possible and contact a group member to find out what you missed. You are responsible for all announcements, assignments, and date changes made in class and for all material covered in class even if you are not there. If you cannot attend a class when an assignment is due, please contact the professor 24 hrs in advance (when possible), and email your assignment before class starts. Otherwise, the paper will be late.

Late Papers: I will take off 1 point for each day an assignment is late. For example, if an assignment is 2 days late, I will take off 2 points from your total grade on the paper. If you email me the paper, I will accept it and log it according to the “received” date on the email. I am not responsible if your email is not working for the simple reason that I cannot grade a paper that I do not have. So if you email a late paper to me, you should also call me to alert me that the paper was sent. You should also request a return email from me acknowledging that I have received the late paper.

Class communication: All class communication will be conducted via your GMU EMAIL ACCOUNT. However, the professor will utilize her personal email account for accepting papers because the GMU faculty email doesn’t work well. Readings will be posted on e-reserve and class lectures posted on Blackboard. Students are responsible for maintaining their GMU account and keeping up to date with announcements and assignments.

Incomplete grades: Incompletes will not be granted except in cases of personal or immediate family illness or emergency occurring in the latter half of the semester, when withdrawal from the class is no longer possible. An incomplete grade WILL NOT BE GRANTED for classes missed in the beginning of the

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semester, or after the final exam day of class. If you miss 4 class periods for any reason you will fail the class.

### REQUIRED READING

Fisher, Simon, et al. (2000) *Working with Conflict: Skills and strategies for action*. New York, NY: Zed Books

Lederach, John Paul, Reina Neufeldt, and Hal Culbertson (2007) *Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Toolkit*. Published by Catholic Relief Services and the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame, IL available at: [http://crs.org/publications/showpdf.cfm?pdf\\_id=80](http://crs.org/publications/showpdf.cfm?pdf_id=80) (as of June 2011)

Lederach, John Paul (1997) *Building Peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. Washington, D.C. US Institute of Peace Press

Pruitt, Dean G., and Sung Hee Kim. (2004) *Social conflict: escalation, stalemate, settlement* (3rd ed). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Thurston, Cathryn (2012) draft manuscript, *The SSAGE System of Conflict Analysis*, on Blackboard

**Additional readings will be required as assigned.** These readings will either be available on Blackboard OR on e-reserve.

**The e-reserve password is: peace**

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## CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS PUBP 654 Spring 2013

*Reading and assignments listed for a class should be completed by the beginning of class.*

### Part I: Conflict Analysis (weeks 1-8)

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|------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Class 1: Jan 22</b> | <b>What is Conflict?</b> |
|------------------------|--------------------------|

**Blackboard:** Thurston (2012) Introduction, draft manuscript

**Readings:** Fisher et al, Chapter 1—Understanding Conflict  
Pruitt and Kim, Chapter 1—Overview

**Assignment DUE:** Answer short questionnaire (found on Blackboard)

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|------------------------|--|
| <b>Class 2: Jan 29</b> | <b>Setting up the SSAGE System for Conflict Analysis</b> |
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**Blackboard:** Thurston, (2012) “Developing a Comprehensive Framework for Conflict Analysis: Sources, Situation, Attitudes, Group Maintenance, Escalation (SSAGE),” draft ms

**Readings:** Fisher et al, Chapter 2—Tools –the ABC Model, p. 25-27

**e-Reserve:** Mitchell, Chris “How Much Do I Need to Know?” in Lederach and Jenners (eds.)  
*Into the Storm*

**Challenge:** Galtung, Johan, “Conflict Transformations,” in *Peace by Peaceful Means*, 1996 (on e-reserve)

**Assignment DUE:** **Monday Question on week 1-2 readings.**  
**Choose a conflict and an organization to analyze.**  
**Be prepared to discuss in class.**

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| <b>Class 3: Feb 5</b> | <b>Conflict Situations: Interests and Goals of Conflict Groups</b> |
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**Blackboard:** Thurston, “Situation,” draft ms

**Readings:** Fisher et al, *Working with Conflict*, Stages of Conflict and Timeline, p 19-21

**E-Reserve:** Dugan, Maire “Imaging the Future” in *Peacebuilding: a field guide* (2001)  
Wilmot and Hocker 7<sup>th</sup> edition, “Chapter 3: Interests and Goals” version 2007

**Challenge:** Volkan, Vamik “From theory to practice: tree model” in *Killing in the Name of Identity*, 2006 on E-Reserve

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**Assignment DUE: Monday Question.**  
**Analyze the conflict Situation using SSAGE System.**  
**Be prepared to discuss in class.**

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| <b>Class 4: Feb 12</b> | <b>Sources of Conflict</b> |
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- Blackboard:** Thurston, (2012) “Sources” draft ms
- Readings:** Pruitt and Kim, Chapter 2—Nature and Sources of Conflict  
Fisher, et al, pages 38-40 “Power”
- E-Reserve:** Hocker and Wilmot, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., “Ch 4: Relational Power” pp. 104-110
- Challenge:** Gurr, Ted Robert (1970) “Chapter 2: Relative Deprivation and the Impetus to Violence,” in *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

**Assignments DUE: Monday Question.**  
**Analyze the conflict Sources using SSAGE System.**  
**Be prepared to discuss in class.**

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| <b>Class 5: Feb 19</b> | <b>Conflict Attitudes</b> |
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(last day to drop is Sept 28)

- Blackboard:** Thurston, “Conflict Attitudes” draft ms
- Reading:** Fisher et al., Chapter 7—Addressing the Consequences
- e-Reserve:** Mitchell, Chris (1981) *The Structure of International Conflict*  
Chapter 4—Psychological Dimensions of Conflict, “perception and cognitive consistency” pp. 78-85  
Chapter 5—Perceptions During Conflict, “adversary images” pp. 104-119
- MacNair, Rachel (2003) “Chapter 2—Psychological effects of violence” in *The Psychology of Peace*, Westport, Conn: Praeger (e-Reserve)
- Challenge:** Christie, Alix. (2006) “Guarding the Truth,” *Washington Post Magazine*, 2/26
- Houppert, Karen (2009) “The Truth about Forgiveness,” *Washington Post Magazine*, 3/22

**Assignments DUE: Monday Question.**  
**Analyze the conflict Attitudes using SSAGE System.**  
**Be prepared to discuss in class.**

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| <b>Class 6: Feb 26</b> | <b>Group Mobilization: The role of culture and identity</b> |
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**Blackboard:** Thurston (2012) Group Mobilization, draft ms

**Reading:** Fisher et al, Chapter 3—Critical Issues  
Lederach, Chapter 2--Characteristics of Deeply Divided Societies

**E-Reserve:** Augsberger, Chapter 3—Conflict: The power of honor, dignity, and face, in *Conflict Mediation across Cultures*, 1992, Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press pp.73-112

Avruch & Black “Conflict Resolution in Intercultural Settings: problems & prospects”

Wilmot and Hocker, Chapter 2: Perspectives in Conflict, gender and culture effects and filters, pp. 53-60

**Assignments DUE:** **Monday Question.**  
**OUTLINE DUE for Conflict Analysis Paper**  
**Analyze the conflict Group Mobilization using SSAGE System.**  
**Be prepared to discuss in class.**

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| <b>Class 7: Mar 5</b> | <b>Tearing it all apart: Conflict Escalation</b> |
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**Blackboard:** Thurston (2012) Escalation, draft ms

**Reading:** Pruitt and Kim  
Chapter 3—Dual Concern Model  
Chapter 4—Contentious Tactics  
Chapter 5-- Escalation  
Chapter 6—Structural change model

**Assignments DUE:** **Monday Question.**  
**Analyze the conflict Escalation using SSAGE System.**  
**Be prepared to discuss in class.**

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| <b>Class 8: Mar 12</b> | <b>NO CLASS---Spring Break</b> |
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### PART II: Intervention Assessment (weeks 9-15)

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| <b>Class 9: Mar 19</b> <b>Guest Speaker</b> |
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Careers in Conflict Analysis and Resolution Or Deciding When to Intervene

**Assignment DUE:**  
**Conflict Analysis Paper using the SSAGE System**

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| <b>Class 10: Mar 26</b> <b>Intervening in Conflict</b> |
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**Reading:**            Pruitt & Kim  
                              Chapter 9—Perceived Stalemate and De-escalation  
                              Chapter 11—Third party intervention

Fisher, et al  
Part 3: Introduction, pp.91-94  
Chapter 6—Intervening Directly in Conflict  
Chapter 8—Working on the Social Fabric

**Assignments DUE:    Monday Question.**

Based on your analysis of the conflict, your boss has asked you to recommend an intervention plan. She recommends you start by looking at your organization's own strategic plan. What is their vision and mission? What is your organization trying to achieve? Next, think about your organization's toolkit. Do they have what it takes to make a positive impact? Your ultimate assignment: build goals and objectives for the intervention as well as an evaluation plan with performance measures.

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| <b>Class 11: Apr 2</b> <b>Developing a Theory of Change, Goals and Objectives</b> |
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**Blackboard:**    Thurston (2012) "The Way Ahead," draft ms

**Readings:**            Lederach, *et al.*: "Chapter 6—Theories of Change" in *Reflective peacebuilding: A planning, monitoring, and learning toolkit* (download online at:  
[http://www.crs.org/publications/showpdf.cfm?pdf\\_id=80](http://www.crs.org/publications/showpdf.cfm?pdf_id=80))

**Assignments DUE:    Monday Question.**

**Develop a theory of change and a main goal (desired endstate) for your conflict. Be prepared to discuss pros and cons of intervening in your conflict.**

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| <b>Class 12: Apr 9</b> | <b>Building Objectives for Third Party Intervention Planning</b> |
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**Readings:** Lederach (1997) Peacebuilding  
Chapter 3—Reconciliation: The Building of Relationship  
Chapter 4—Structure: Lenses for the Big Picture  
Chapter 5—Process: The dynamics and progression of conflict  
Chapter 6—An integrated framework for peacebuilding

**Assignments DUE:** **Monday Question.**  
**Develop goals and objectives for your conflict intervention.**  
**Be prepared to discuss in class.**

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| <b>Class 13: Apr 16</b> | <b>Formal and Informal Third Party Intervention Tasks/Activities</b> |
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**Reading:** Fisher, et al  
Chapter 4—Building Strategies to Address Conflict  
READ: Intro, Multi-level triangles, and The Grid

**E-Reserve:** Diamond and McDonald— “Intro: The System as a Whole” in *Multi-Track Diplomacy*

**Assignments DUE:** **Monday Question.**  
**Choose one task or activity to develop, and finish your theory of change.**  
**Be prepared to discuss in class.**

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| <b>Class 14: Apr 23</b> | <b>Evaluating Conflict Interventions</b> |
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**Reading:** Lederach, et al., Chapters 7-9: Reflective peacebuilding: A planning, monitoring and learning toolkit (download online:  
[http://www.crs.org/publications/showpdf.cfm?pdf\\_id=80](http://www.crs.org/publications/showpdf.cfm?pdf_id=80))

**Assignments DUE:** **Work through evaluation framework**  
**Be prepared to discuss in class.**

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|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Class 15: Apr 30</b> | <b>Final Class: Party and Discussion</b> |
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**Assignment DUE:**  
**Conflict Intervention and Evaluation Paper**

**Assignment DUE:** Be prepared to discuss the similarities and differences between your plans within your groups and between your groups. What were the main challenges? What was surprising?

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|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Class 16: May 7</b> | <b>Final No class will meet.</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|

**Assignment DUE:** **Reflection Paper on SSAGE System**  
**Please email your paper to me at [cthursto@gmu.edu](mailto:cthursto@gmu.edu)**