



Mahidol University
International College

ICIR 305 Conflict Resolution

Course Description & Aims:

This lectured-based course seeks to explore and review Development of the studies of peace, war and conflict. Philosophical, legal and political questions related to peace. Concepts and theories of conflict, war and peace. The course will introduce students to concepts and theories of peace and conflict as well as approaches and challenges in handling them. It looks at peace and conflict both as an outcome as well as an approach or process. The course looks also at philosophical, legal, and political questions related to peace and conflict and examines underlying assumptions and implications of peace in our attempt to understand various social phenomena. Case studies of conflicts will be examined to highlight the progress of conflict and the challenges in transforming and resolving them. The course is comprised of origins and methods of conflict resolution; typologies and historical trends of conflict and violence; conflict prevention and containment; negotiation and international agreements; cessation of hostilities and durable standards for the implementation of conflict settlements; terrorism, justice, and the rule of law; modern warfare dynamics and ways to counter internecine conflict cycles. Students will analyze, examine and critically assess why some methods of conflict resolution are more effective than others.

Lecturer: TBA

Office number and hours: By appointment

e-mail address:

Assessment

Mid-Term Exam (written)	15%
Final Exam(written)	20%
One Group Project/Presentation	20%
Two Case Studies Report 10 x2 =	20%
Two Scenarios Analysis 10 x 2 =	20%
Class discussion	5%

Course Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. To comprehend and analyze the key practical and theoretical concepts of managing and resolving conflicts
2. To analyze and describe the nature of small and large-scale conflicts
3. To articulate the practical components of negotiation and mediation and explain the link between effective negotiation skills and effective leadership
4. To assess the efficiencies of the different types of conflict management styles
5. To explain the importance of good communication skills and analyze the influence of gender and cultural differences, persuasion, perception and power in conflict resolution

Topic No.	Topic
1	Differentiating typologies of conflict, trends in conflict, violence & resolution
2	Conflict prevention, frameworks and structures, conflict containment and international organization
3	Types of conflict resolution (crisis management peacekeeping etc)
4	Peacebuilding, peacemaking, reconciliation, disarming
5	Post world war2 operations
6	Influence of decolonization
7	Postmodern nationalism, bottom-up strategies for peace, 4 th generation warfare & asymmetric strategies of engagement
8	Terrorism, justice, rule of law & foreign aid, ethnics, principles and politics of conflict resolution
9	International law as a negotiated order of resolution frameworks
10	Relations of Conflicts and morality (What happens when we face “difficult” conflicts (those about issues of morality, faith, belief, human rights, culture)?
11	Multilateralism and bi-lateral norms and frameworks
12	Future of conflicts and conflict resolution

Assessment Methods & Criteria

- 1) Mid-Term Exam (written) 15%
 - a. The mid-term exam will be held in week six. Short answer format.
 - b. The contents will be main issues relating to the background of major global conflicts in the late 1900s
- 2) Final Exam(written) 20%
 - a. The in class final exam will be held a week after the last lecture
 - b. Students will be given essay choices. They will choose two essay topics and elaborate the analysis.
 - c. The contents concern with the latest international relations and negotiations.
- 3) One Group Project/Presentation 20%
 - a. The students will be given choices of topics about current global conflicts in the region. Such as Terrorism, justice, rule of law & foreign aid, ethnics, principles and politics of conflict resolution
 - b. The group project consists of 4-5 students per group.
 - c. The group will have to produce one hard copy of the research.
 - d. The group will present their findings
- 4) Two Case Studies Report 10 x 2 = 20%
 - a. Students will watch 2 short documentary films and analyze issues in the film
 - b. Students will write short report and their finding from the films
- 5) Two Scenarios Analysis 10 x 2 = 20%
 - a. The students will be presented with current international conflicts in the region
 - b. The students will have to address causes and effects of the conflict in the region
 - c. After analyzing the situation of the conflicts, students will have to offer solutions to reduce or solve the conflicts.
- 6) Class discussion 5%
 - a. This will be accounted from the student’s participation in class

Marking Criteria:

1. Originality of argument: Is the claim that is advanced unique and imaginative?
2. Use of literature: Were the relevant resources consulted and evaluated?
3. Soundness of analysis: Does the essay adequately provide a logical and cogent answer to the question?
4. Organization of evidence: Is the argument presented in an orderly and cogent way?
5. Validity of findings: Can the argument stand up to empirical verification?
6. Clarity of presentation: Does the presenter fluent and articulate?

Differentiating Typologies of Conflict, Trends in Conflict, Violence & Resolution

Topic Description: Introduction to types of conflict such as international conflict, war, ethnic conflict, revolution, religious conflict and ideological conflict. Current trend in conflict are towards religious, ethnic and ideological confrontation. International conflicts and war are becoming less prevalent. Violence can take many forms, violent protest, abuse against certain groups or individuals, military conflict, etc. Since violence and conflict have several different kinds and types, resolutions have to be geared to the particular conflict.

Expected learning outcome: Students will be able to understand the various types of conflict. Students should also be able to identify the type of violence in certain conflicts.

Reading:

- Avruch, K. & Mitchell, C. (eds.). (2013). *Conflict Resolution and Human Needs*. New York: Routledge.
- Dunn, D. J. (2004). *From Power Politics to Conflict Resolution. The Work of John W. Burton*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wallensteen, P. (2002). *Understanding Conflict Resolution War, Peace and the Global System*. London: Sage.

Activities: 1) Ask students to name some major conflicts they know of in the world at present and to try to identify the type. In groups have students discuss what kinds of violence are involved in these named conflicts and report to the class.

Conflict Prevention, Frameworks and Structures, Conflict Containment and International Organization

Topic Description: Introduction to some ways conflict has been prevented or avoided in past confrontational situations. As technology advances, conflict changes, violence becomes more complicated so conflict prevention has to take into account the level or technology and the ability of parties to reach people with information. Give examples of changes in violence and in conflict prevention.

Expected learning outcome: Students should be able to understand how antecedents of violent conflict may remain the same but possible outlets change. Students should also be able to apply some background knowledge to consider how past measures may or may not work at present.

Reading:

- Mayer, B. (2016). *The Dynamics of Conflict*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Ramsbotham, O., Miall, H. & Woodhouse, T (2011). *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of deadly conflicts*. 3rd ed. MA: Polity.
- Social Conflict: escalation, stalemate, and settlement. Third Edition (2004) by Dean G. Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim

Activities: have students identify four types of conflicts in the world today, discuss the level of kind of violence involved and how some past measures may or may not work for to prevent or alleviate these conflicts. This activity can be done as class discussion or in groups.

Types of Conflict Resolution (Crisis management peacekeeping etc)

Topic Description: Students will be presented with some different types of conflict resolution measures like crisis management, peacekeeping, peaceful protest and consultation theory. Students will be shown examples of these different measures. Differences between conflict resolution ideas will be explained. It will be demonstrated that there is not one right measure but the cultures of the people involved, type of conflict, level of violence and the issue under contention has to be considered.

Expected learning outcome: Students should get a basic understanding of what conflict resolution is. Students should also be able to comprehend what each type of measure involves.

Reading:

- Dunn, D. J. (2004). *From Power Politics to Conflict Resolution. The Work of John W. Burton*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Richmond, O. P (2008). *Peace in International Relations*. NY: Routledge.
- Wallensteen, P. (2002). *Understanding Conflict Resolution War, Peace and the Global System*. London: Sage.

Activity: After class discussion, have students each list three conflicts, if possible, of three different types and identify the kind and level of violence possible. They should then list what type of resolution might be used. This is only to show understanding of material not to apply resolution measures.

Peacebuilding, Peacemaking, Reconciliation, Disarming

Topic Description: It will be explained that peacekeeping is the use of third parties to keep the different combatants separated and prevent violence. Peacemaking, on the other hand, is the use of measures to stop a conflict and bring about a peaceful solution. Reconciliation goes beyond peacemaking and is an attempt to eliminate the cause of the conflict and induce the sides to work together. Disarming is the elimination of the weapons that make the violence possible.

Expected learning outcome: Students should understand the differences between these methods and how each is a further level of resolution from the previous. The students must realize that these are not different methods but parts of a process.

Reading:

- Dunn, D. J. (2004). *From Power Politics to Conflict Resolution. The Work of John W. Burton*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Richmond, O. P (2008). *Peace in International Relations*. NY: Routledge.
- Wallensteen, P. (2002). *Understanding Conflict Resolution War, Peace and the Global System*. London: Sage.

Activities: Have two groups of students represent each side of a chosen conflict. Have each present their case. The other students in the class should then identify the conflict, identify a resolution method and say what level of resolution would be reached by that method.

Post World War 2 Operations

Topic Description: This week will involve discussions of how World War 2 changed the nature of both internal conflict and international war. After World War 2, weapons were

developed that could not be used except in total warfare making it possible for smaller states and non-state groups to attack powerful nation-states because of those nation—states' inability to use their weapons. The new technologies also made it more difficult for nation-states to visibly slaughter their own people so it made violent protest more viable.

Expected learning outcome: Students should understand that and how the nature of warfare and conflict changed after World War 2. They should then be able to critically evaluate contemporary conflicts in light of that understanding and explain why these conflicts are different from those of the past.

Reading:

- Dunn, D. J. (2004). *From Power Politics to Conflict Resolution. The Work of John W. Burton*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Porto, J. G. et. al. (2007). *From Soldiers to Citizens: Demilitarization of Conflict and Society*. USA: Ashgate.
- Kupchan, C. A. (2010). *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace*. UP, NJ: Princeton.

Activities: Ask students to use the knowledge gained in this class to explain why the US lost the Vietnam war and why the USSR lost its Afghan war. Also discuss such non-violent revolutions as Haiti and the Philippines in 1986. Ask students to identify two reasons that these two conflicts brought down dictators who were entrenched.

Influence of Decolonization

Topic description: Students will be introduced to the history of decolonization that occurred in the middle of the 20th century. The ideologies and justifications for colonization and decolonization will be explained and discussed. Students will then be presented with the process of decolonization in light of the post-World War 2 world with its new technologies and ideologies. The ideas of such anti-colonization activists as Gandhi, Fanon and Ho Chi Minh will be discussed.

Expected learning outcome: Students should be able to compare the change in the way conflicts after world war 2 with the methods used by decolonization activists.

Reading:

- Mayer, B. (2016). *The Dynamics of Conflict*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Merrills, J. G. (2007). *International Dispute Settlement*. 4th edition. UP, NY: Cambridge.
- Ramsbotham, O., Miall, H. & Woodhouse, T (2011). *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of deadly conflicts*. 3rd ed. MA: Polity.

Activities: Have students in groups take each one anti-colonialist activist or movement, identify the issues and explain how the post-world war 2 environment made the movement or activist possible. They should then present their findings to the class as a whole.

Postmodern Nationalism, Bottom-up Strategies for Peace, 4th Generation Warfare & Asymmetric Strategies of Engagement

Topic description: Students will be introduced with the paradigm of changing nature of warfare such as wars of liberation, insurgencies, terrorism, proxy wars, sub-conventional warfare, as the twentieth century drew to a close, saw the increased proliferation of conflict between non-state actors and the state. Student will learn that Modernism was generally based on idealism and a utopian vision of human life and society and a belief in progress.

Different Ideals, beliefs, social aspects and goals are contributed to conflicts in the modern day. Strategies to harmonize the differences will be introduced.

Expected learning outcome: Student should be able to understand caused of conflicts and be able to analyze the solutions to conflicts.

Readings:

- Richmond, O. P (2008). *Peace in International Relations*. NY: Routledge.
- Ramsbotham, O., Miall, H. & Woodhouse, T (2011). *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of deadly conflicts*. 3rd ed. MA: Polity.
- Getting Past No: Negotiating with Difficult People. (1991) by William Ury.

Activity: Students will be assigned with case studies. Students have to address the causes of conflicts and offer solutions to harmonize or solve the conflicts.

Terrorism, Justice, Rule of Law & Foreign Aid, Ethics

Topic Description: The political nature of such concepts as Terrorism, justice, rule of law & foreign aid, ethnics, principles and politics of conflict resolution will be discussed. Students will learn that these terms are politically and ethically relative and are usually used by those who have to power to delegitimize their adversaries or enemies. The nature of terrorism and the fact that it cannot be defined will be discussed. That subjective nature will be also applied to such concepts as “justice” and “rule of law”. The purpose of foreign aid to buy allies or buy off potential adversaries must be understood and the concept of justice analyzed.

Expected learning outcome: Students should understand and be able to apply these concepts to various conflicts and be able to analyze and apply resolutions that take into account the subject and relative nature of these terms.

Reading:

- Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (revised edition, 2006), 13-129.
- Timothy Naftali, *Blind Spot: The Secret History of American Counterterrorism* (2005), 54-149

Activity: Writing assignment. Take one “terrorist incident”, identify the reasons and the issues on both sides. Explain how it violates the “rule of law” according to the established institutions and offer a resolution.

International Law as a Negotiated Order of Resolution Frameworks

Topic Description: Explain how international law differs from legislated (positive) law within nation-states or other state entities. International law is based on treaties, protocols and agreements that do not have the force of law in the ordinary sense. Explanation of the legislative process. Explain the nature of international agreements within the conflict resolution network as a negotiated settlement or agreement.

Expected learning outcome: Students should understand the difference between legislated law and international law and should be able to apply that knowledge to the issues of negotiations, treaties and protocols.

Reading:

- Hurd, Ian International Organizations: Politics, Law, Practice. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) [ISBN 9780521147378].
- Karns, Margaret P. and Karen A. Mingst International Organizations: The Politics and Processes of Global Governance. (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2010) second edition [ISBN 9781588266989].

Activities: Discussion, using the conflict resolution framework, could the UN become an international body with the power and authority to legislate and enforce international law that would avoid violent conflict? After discussion, have students write a short paragraph outlining their conclusion.

Relations of Conflicts and Morality (What happens when we face “difficult” conflicts (those about issues of morality, faith, belief, human rights, culture)?

Topic Description: Explanation of some sources of ethics and morality such as religious faith, human rights, culture, natural rights or scientific investigation. Discussion with students about the relation of morality to conflicts. Do conflicts always involve a difference in understanding of ethical issues. Why, for example, would some Muslim groups believe it is acceptable to kill people who violate the religion or persecute Muslims but not that it is acceptable to kill people for the advancement of the state while some Western people believe that it is acceptable to kill or torture people to advance the nation-state but that to do so for religious belief is barbaric?

Expected learning outcome: Students should, from this, be able to identify the ethical principles involved in various conflicts and apply that knowledge to other conflicts.

Reading:

- Pruitt, D., Rubin, J., & Kim, S. H. (2004). Social conflict: Escalation, stalemate, and settlement. McGraw-Hill.
- Getting Past No: Negotiating with Difficult People. (1991) by William Ury.

Activities: How can the rule of law be maintained or restored when two groups have completely different views of ethics that lead to conflict? Ask this question and solicit ideas. Then ask what resolution method or theory would best serve this case.

Multilateralism and Bi-lateral Norms and Frameworks

Topic Description: The differences between Multilateralism and bi-lateralism. One involves more than two parties and the other involves two parties. In order to enhance understanding use example of Cold War division of the world into two poles. Then explain how that evolved into a multilateral and multilevel conflict. Identify the forms and frameworks of each level of conflict.

Expected learning outcome: Students should be able to determine what sorts of conflicts are involved in various case studies and should be able to apply various ideas to each case.

Reading:

- Brett, J. M. (2001). Negotiating globally: How to negotiate deals, resolve disputes, and make decisions across cultural boundaries.
- San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Fisher, R., Ury, W.L., & Patton, B. (1991). Getting to Yes: Negotiating an Agreement without Giving in. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Activities: Use a current conflict such as Syria as an example. Ask different groups of students to represent the various and many parties to the conflict. Then ask them to try to negotiate a solution.

Future of Conflicts and Conflict Resolution

Topic Description: Future of conflict and conflict resolution is the main topic. The two most prevalent conflicts today are religious and ethnic conflicts. There is also still class conflict in some societies. More and more all conflicts are taking on a religious or belief centered nature. Two possible solutions would be 1) to abolish religion. That has been tried in some major

communist countries and has failed. Or 2) to find the common ground between all religions. This sort of analysis can also be applied to other conflicts.

Expected learning outcome: Students should be able to apply a belief or values based ideology to the understanding of conflicts and should then be able to offer solutions based on that ideology.

Reading:

- Wallensteen, P. (2002). *Understanding Conflict Resolution War, Peace and the Global System*. London: Sage.
- Ramsbotham, O., Miall, H. & Woodhouse, T (2011). *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of deadly conflicts*. 3rd ed. MA: Polity.

Activities: None.