Conrad Grebel University College at the University of Waterloo

PACS 202 / LS 271 Conflict Resolution
Winter 2022

Class Times: Monday and Wednesday, 10:00 to 11:20 am
Location: Room 1111 (Great Hall), Conrad Grebel
Instructor: Dr. Michael Lawrence
Email: m8lawren@uwaterloo.ca
Office Hours: by appointment; please email me to set up a call

Conrad Grebel University College and the University of Waterloo reside on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River, within the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee peoples.

Course Description:

This course introduces you to concepts and practices of conflict resolution as they apply from interpersonal to international scales of conflict. We begin by considering the nature of conflict, looking beyond parties’ stated positions to their underlying interests and even deeper to their fundamental values. After highlighting the role of cognition and social psychology in conflict escalation, we will explore cognitive-affective mapping and inter-group contact as approaches to conflict resolution that address these aspects of conflict. The course then turns to processes of mediation, arbitration, adjudication, restorative justice, and reconciliation. We will consider the circumstances in which each process is most appropriate, the steps each process involves, their strengths and weaknesses, and different strategies for success.

While exploring the various concepts, processes, and practices of conflict resolution, the course aspires to improve your self-awareness of your own tendencies and ‘styles’ of conflict and conflict resolution. The course features arts and media (particularly documentaries and feature films) as tools that help us better understand conflict, and as purposive efforts to intervene in and remediate real-world conflicts.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the term, you should be able to:

- Explain the central concepts and practices of conflict resolution.
- Deconstruct conflict to identify underlying issues and opportunities for resolution.
- Distinguish processes of mediation, arbitration, adjudication, restorative justice, and reconciliation, including what they do and when they are appropriate.
- Enjoy greater self-awareness about your personal style, biases, and positionality within processes of conflict and mediation.
Context for PACS 202:

PACS 202 is one of three introductory 200-level Core Courses in Peace and Conflict Studies. Although these three courses can be taken in any order, each builds on, and adds to, the foundation laid by the previous course.

- PACS 201, Roots of Conflict, Violence and Peace, explores the causes of violence and examines the various dynamics of human conflict, aggression, and war.
- PACS 202, Conflict Resolution, introduces students to the different theories and methods of conflict resolution, ranging from interpersonal to broader social and international conflicts.
- PACS 203, History of Peace Movements, examines how individuals and groups working collectively have advanced the cause of peace in particular circumstances. It explores the ways in which those at the forefront of peace movements have actualized the principles and practices analyzed in PACS 201 and 202.

Course Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed. Jan. 5</td>
<td>Introduction and Course Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. Jan. 31; Wed. Feb. 2</td>
<td>Week 4 – Cognitive-Affective Mapping and Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. Feb. 7; Wed. Feb. 9</td>
<td>Week 5 – Group Identities in Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. Feb. 14; Wed. Feb. 16</td>
<td>Week 6 – The Self in Conflict and the ‘Me’ in Mediator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 19 – 27</td>
<td>Reading Week (no class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. Feb. 18; Wed. Mar. 2</td>
<td>Week 7 – Mediation, Arbitration, Adjudication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. Mar. 7; Wed. Mar. 9</td>
<td>Week 8 – Mediation and Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. Mar. 21; Wed. Mar. 23</td>
<td>Week 10 – Reconciliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. Mar. 28; Wed. Mar. 30</td>
<td>Course Wrap-Up and Final (Take-Home) Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue. Apr. 5</td>
<td>Final (Take Home) Exam Due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation:

- Weekly Quizzes (best 8 of 10) 30%
- Assignment (due February 16) 30%
- Final (Take-Home) Exam (due April 5) 40%

Weekly Quizzes: Each week from the first full week (the week of January 10) to the tenth full week (the week of March 21) of the course will include a quiz about the readings, administered through the course learn site. Each weekly quiz will become available at 12:01 am on the Saturday before the relevant weekly sessions (Monday and Wednesday), and close at 11:59 pm on the Friday after the relevant sessions. That week’s quiz will no longer be available after this time, and no extensions will be granted. Your best eight scores on the ten quizzes will make up this portion of your mark (that is, your worst two of ten scores will be discarded). These quizzes concern only the contents of the readings, not the contents of lectures or media (which may differ from the views presented in the readings).

First Assignment: The first assignment will ask you to take a stance on a particular social issue (which will be specified and explained when the assignment is distributed on February 2nd). In the first (diagramming) part of the assignment, you will use Valence software (free and available online at https://valence.cascadeinstitute.org/) to produce a cognitive-affective map (CAM) of your own belief system as it relates to the issue, and a CAM of what you think are a typical opponent’s beliefs on the same issue. In the second (written) part of the assignment, you will explain these two CAMs and reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses of the CAM tool. This assignment is due by 11:59 pm EST on Wednesday, February 16. Late submissions will be penalized 5% for each day late, including weekends. Extensions will only be granted in cases of valid and verified reasons.

Final (Take-Home) Exam: You will have one week at the end of the course to provide essay responses to questions you will select from a list of question options. Your responses should demonstrate strong knowledge of course themes, lecture topics, course media, and weekly readings. Good responses will require preparation before the exam is posted, so please study in advance in order to maximize your performance. Late submissions will not be accepted, except in cases of valid and verified reasons.

Course Website and Course Readings:

This course features a LEARN website that will be central to course activities and requirements. The site includes links to the weekly readings, weekly quizzes on the readings (weeks 1-10), a virtual classroom for any sessions that we must conduct online due to public health measures, a dropbox where you will submit your assignments and your final exam, and discussion boards for those who wish to pursue course themes further. You will need to use these tools of the course LEARN page regularly in order to meet the requirements of this course.
University of Waterloo Policies

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. For more information, please see the Faculty of Arts’ [Academic Integrity website](#) and visit the University’s [Academic Integrity Office](#).

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 — Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - [Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4.

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals.

**Turnitin.com:** Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students’ submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.
Resources for Students:

Note for students with learning differences: The AccessAbility Services (AAS) office, located in Needles Hall North, 1st floor, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AAS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Counselling Services: Counselling Services provides free confidential counselling, in both individual and group sessions, with qualified professionals to help registered students, faculty and staff with personal concerns, educational career decisions, and strategies to studies and exams: www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocus, ext. 33528, NH Room 2080.

Accommodation for Illness: A medical certificate presented in support of an official petition for relief from normal academic requirements must provide all of the information requested on the “University of Waterloo Verification of Illness” form or it will not be accepted. More information can be obtained from Health Services and the form is available in pdf: https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/student-medical-clinic/services/verification-illness.

The Writing Centre: Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. Make an appointment or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre.
Detailed Weekly Schedule:

Wednesday, January 5 – Introduction and Course Overview

In this preliminary session, we will go through the course syllabus. I will highlight the key themes of the course, the progression of weekly themes, the evaluation scheme, and course expectations—that is, what I expect from you as a student, and what you can expect from me as your instructor.

Week 1: Parties in Conflict: Positions, Interests, and Values

What is conflict really about? After defining conflict, we will develop a basic framework for understanding the sources of conflict and their implications for conflict resolution. We will move from conflicts in the positions of the parties to conflicts in their underlying interests to conflicts in the value systems underpinning those interests. Depending on the level at which they occur, conflicts feature different demands and opportunities for conflict resolution.

Monday, January 10 – Lecture

Wednesday, January 12 – Media: Gandhi (first half)

Weekly Readings:

Week 2: The Social Context of Conflict: Power, Rules, and Legitimacy

How does the social context shape conflict and conflict resolution? Whatever the positions, interests, and values of the parties, their conflict occurs in a broader social context that includes established rules and beliefs about legitimacy. This context shapes the different forms of power that parties use in their conflict, and the ways in which power, rules, and values can shape the resolution of conflict.

Monday, January 17 – Media: Gandhi (second half)
Wednesday, January 19 – Lecture

Weekly Readings:

**Week 3: Conflict and Cognition**

How does our psychology shape our experience of conflict and create opportunities and constraints for conflict resolution? Cognitive biases (such as attribution, confirmation, and motivated reasoning) can easily deepen conflicts and, in the extreme, lead adversaries to dehumanize one another. But where conventional wisdom suggests that parties should suppress their emotions in order to resolve their conflict, recent advances in psychology suggest that emotions are *indispensable* to both conflict and conflict resolution. This is especially the case in conflicts over moral issues, which require a deeper understanding of moral cognition. As we shall see, scholars and practitioners continue to debate the best ways in which to address reason and emotion in processes of conflict resolution.

Monday, January 24 – Media: *Faces of the Enemy*

Wednesday, January 26 – Lecture

Weekly Readings:

**Week 4: Cognitive-Affective Mapping and Assignment**

How can we better understand the belief systems involved in conflict? This session will introduce you to *cognitive-affective mapping* – a new tool of conflict analysis and resolution that integrates emotions and worldviews into the study of contentious social and political issues. In your first assignment, you will apply this tool to explore your own views, and your perceptions of others’ views, on a particular social issue (to be determined) using the free, web-based cognitive-affective mapping software *Valence*. We will also explore the particular social issue upon which the assignment focuses.

Monday, January 31 – Lecture
Wednesday, February 2 – **The assignment will be distributed in class.** We will discuss the assignment and explore the social issue on which it focuses.

**Readings:**
- Explore the *Valence* tool for cognitive-affective mapping, available at: [https://valence.cascadeinstitute.org/](https://valence.cascadeinstitute.org/).
- Assignment-related readings TBD (and are **not** covered in the weekly quiz).

**Week 5: Group Identities in Conflict**

How do we build bridges between group identities in conflict? In this session we will explore the ways in which group identities form, change, conflict, and reconcile. We will consider the famous Robbers Cave Experiment in which social psychologist Muzafer Sherif created conflicting social identities and then remediated their antagonism in the real-world setting of a boys summer camp. We will then evaluate Contact Theory, which proposes that (under the right conditions, which continue to be debated) inter-group hostility can be reduced by strengthening personal contacts between individuals from conflicting groups.

**Monday, February 7 – Lecture**

**Wednesday, February 9 – Media: Knowledge is the Beginning**

**Weekly Readings:**

**Week 6: The Self in Conflict and the ‘Me’ in Mediator**

How do our personalities affect our behaviour as parties to conflict and as mediators? In this session, we will explore different “conflict styles” – ways in which different personality types approach conflict and negotiation – and the traits and practices that enable effective conflict mediation. The goal of the session is to help you build greater self-awareness about your own biases, proclivities, and positionality within processes of conflict and conflict resolution.

**Monday, February 14 – Lecture**
Wednesday, February 16 – Media: The Fog of War

***Assignment due Wednesday, February 16 by 11:59 pm EST.

Readings:

READING WEEK: Feb. 19 – 27 – No Class

Week 7: Mediation, Arbitration, and Adjudication

What processes can we use to resolve conflict? We will explore practices of mediation (in which a third party helps the parties come a resolution), arbitration (in which an authoritative third party decides an appropriate resolution), and adjudication (in which the conflict is settled through formal legal proceedings). In the first lecture, we will explore mediation as a process in which the mediator develops and tests hypotheses about the nature of the conflict through well-established steps. In the second lecture, we will consider the extent to which Canada’s legal system does and does not offer means of conflict resolution.

Monday, February 28 – Lecture

Wednesday, March 2 – Lecture

Readings:

Week 8: Mediation and Communication

How can mediators foster effective communication with and between the parties in conflict? Communication is essential but hardly straightforward; it is rife with politics, inequities, and nuances that reflect the complexities of any given conflict. Mediators must often uphold and reconcile seemingly opposed ideas lest they oversimplify the conflict. We will explore different
strategies and techniques used to encourage constructive communication and build dialogue in processes of conflict resolution.

Monday, March 7 – Lecture

Wednesday, March 9 – Media: TBD

Weekly Readings:

Week 9: Restorative Justice

In what circumstances can (or should) an offending party regain membership in the harmed community? Restorative justice attempts to repair relationships and restore an offending party (or parties) to a community. The process generally hinges on offering apology and granting forgiveness in a difficult process that requires careful facilitation. The Canadian legal system sometimes provides for victim-offender mediation as one approach to restorative justice. In the wake of genocide, Rwanda pursued restorative justice on a massive scale using gacaca tribunals, a process that has garnered both praise and criticism.

Monday, March 14 – Lecture

Wednesday, March 16 – Media: As We Forgive

Weekly Readings:

Week 10: Reconciliation

What does it mean to reconcile and what does it have to do with ‘truth’? Reconciliation generally involves efforts to build mutual understanding and respect between individuals and
groups in conflict. When conflicts are deeply rooted in history, however, reconciliation also requires us to reconcile who we think we are with the fraught history that has made us who we are. Both dimensions of reconciliation are especially crucial today as Canada begins to confront its colonial and genocidal treatment of indigenous peoples.

Monday, March 21 – Lecture

Wednesday, March 23 – Media: Colonization Road

Weekly Readings:


**Week 11: Course-Wrap up and Final (Take-Home) Exam**

In our final week we will review key course themes, address outstanding conflict resolution topics not covered in previous lectures, and discuss guidance for the take-home exam.

Monday, March 28 – Lecture

Wednesday, March 30 – Distribution and discussion of final (take-home) exam

Weekly Readings:

- To be determined.

***Final (take-home) exam due Tuesday, April 5 by midnight.***