INTL 8225: International Conflict Management
University of Georgia, Department of International Affairs

Course Instructor Information:
Dr. Andrew Owsiak
Email: aowsiak@uga.edu
Office: 325 Candler Hall
Office Hours: 3:30-4:30p Tues., 10-11a Weds.
(or by appointment)

Course Meeting Information:
Fall 2015
Tuesdays, 12:30-3:15pm
117 Candler Hall
https://uga.view.usg.edu/

Course Overview
A common theme in international relations research involves the causes and consequences of militarized conflict between states. Many grand and mid-range theories seek to understand why states fight one another and how these disputes escalate to war. Taking these studies as a backdrop, this seminar addresses a slightly different series of questions. What can states do to manage the causes and consequences of militarized conflict? Further, can conflict be resolved, and if so, how?

There exists no consensus (or coherent) position about how to answer these questions. As you will learn first-hand, the subfield of international conflict management contains a diversity of perspectives. The current course is designed to reflect this diversity, and it proceeds in four general sections. First, we begin by trying to develop a conceptual definition of conflict management (and resolution). What do scholars mean when they refer to conflict management, and how is it different than conflict resolution? Does the answer to these questions affect how we study the process(es) of conflict management? Once we understand more about the concept(s), we will then briefly (re)examine some international conflict literature. By understanding why conflict occurs and how it ends, we will begin to get a glimpse of the environment in which conflict management operates, as well as (perhaps) what intervention efforts must do to succeed. Third, we will consider a series of conflict management theories and techniques (for example, negotiation, mediation, arbitration and adjudication, peace operations). How does conflict management/resolution work? What tools are available to disputants and third-parties, and what conditions determine their applicability and success? Finally, we return in the end to where we began. We ask once again whether conflict resolution is possible (through transitional justice and reconciliation in post-conflict societies) and explore some potential obstacles to its occurrence (if it can in fact be achieved). Throughout the course, we will also explore what conflict management scholars do (i.e., theory construction), how they do it (i.e., methods and research design), what problems they face, and what they can do better.

It should be clear at the outset that this is not exactly a course in international conflict or human rights. This course is therefore not a substitute for these. We will also not address the practice of conflict management directly. For example, we will not discuss how one would (or should) mediate an international dispute. Although this is undoubtedly an important question, it lies beyond the scope of this course. We will instead focus on understanding how scholars approach international conflict management topics and conduct research on them, and we will do this primarily from a political science perspective (although our readings might occasionally venture into other disciplines). Despite these caveats, students are encouraged to confront and challenge the policy implications of the work we study.
Learning Objectives
At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

• Identify and explain the various topics within the field of international conflict management, the current state of research on them, and how they relate to one another;
• Appreciate the challenges faced by conflict management scholars and practitioners;
• Critically evaluate theoretical and empirical arguments made in the scholarly literature;
• Write a syntheses and/or critical assessment of scholarly literature;
• Identify potential avenues of future research; and (/or)
• Construct a research design that can serve as the foundation for a future scholarly paper.

Course Readings
We will read large sections of the following books, which I therefore recommend for purchase:


Any assigned readings beyond the required textbooks listed above will be made available electronically from the instructor – via the eLearning Commons (eLC) website (log-in using UGA MyID at: https://uga.view.usg.edu/). If the library owns a copy of the required books listed above, they have also been placed on reserve at the library for the semester.

Course Requirements
There are two tracks of requirements for this course: one for PhD students and another for MA and/or MIP (Masters in International Policy) students. MA/MIP students may elect to take the PhD track if they would like; in fact, I encourage this, especially if MA/MIP students need to complete a thesis or capstone project during the spring semester. Either way, students should notify the instructor of their intention at the outset of the course.

Both Tracks:
All students will be required to do the following:

Participation (20% of final grade):
As with any graduate course, attendance and participation are critical and required. My goal is to have you directly engage the course material, rather than passively hear about it. Therefore, I will conduct each class meeting as an open-ended discussion of the material assigned for that day, rather than a traditional lecture. Students should prepare for class by reading the assigned material (before we meet), prepare any assignments listed for the week (if any), and actively contribute to the discussion in class. I will grade participation based on the following factors: (a) attendance, (b) frequency with which a student participates in discussion (i.e., quantity), (c) extent to which student comments contribute positively to the discussion (i.e., quality), (d) the
extent to which a student identifies key points and raises appropriate questions, and (e) the extent to which comments demonstrate that the student has thought about and processed the readings. Appropriate questions include those that critique, extend, or request clarification of readings, as well as those that connect various readings to one another.

(Note: During our discussions in the classroom, students may be called upon randomly using a lottery system in which I sample with replacement. Therefore encourage students to be prepared for our meetings.)

Track A: MA/MIP Students
In addition to the participation component above, MA/MIP students are required to complete the following:

Literature Review (35% of final grade):
Students will complete one (1) 8-10 page literature review during the semester on a conflict management strategy of their choice (negotiation, mediation, arbitration/adjudication, peace operations, or another topic as approved by the instructor). In this paper, students should: a) use the readings in the syllabus as a starting point and investigate additional literature on their topic, and b) summarize and critically evaluate the literature along a number of avenues. When addressing the latter, please consider: a) how the literature converges/diverges (that is, do different studies confirm or contradict one another), b) what has been done well/poorly, and c) whether there exist any topics that remain unaddressed or questions that beg for an answer. Note that this paper is not a reading-by-reading summary of what has been done (e.g., “Author A says X. Author B says Y.”). Rather, students should work to draw connections between individual readings and evaluate the body of research as a whole. Students may find it helpful to narrow the scope of this review and are encouraged to consult the instructor with questions as they plan and write these papers. These papers are due on the date that we address the papers’ topic in class, and students will sign up for specific topics during the second week of the course.

Final Exam (45% of final grade):
The course will conclude with a take-home (comprehensive) exam. The exam itself will consist of 1-2 questions and amount to 10-12 pages of writing. This exam will be distributed in class on December 1. Students will turn in a hard-copy of this exam to the instructor by 5:00pm on December 8 (Tuesday).

Track B: PhD Students
In addition to the participation component above, PhD students are required to complete the following:

Research Paper (70% of final grade):
Students will complete an original research paper (approximately 15-20 pages, inclusive of all material) – focusing on only the research design components of a typical academic paper (introduction, theory, literature review, research design/methods). Students may also complete the methodological analysis associated with their paper during the semester if they like. Our goal will be to produce a solid research project upon which students can build in the coming semester(s). Ultimately, students should consider submitting this paper for presentation at an academic conference.

The research paper will be completed and revised in stages according to the following schedule:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>September 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography/References</td>
<td>September 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>October 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>October 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>November 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>December 8 (final paper due)</td>
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Presentation of Research Paper (10% of final grade)
Students will present papers to the class on December 1. Others in the department (students and faculty) will be invited to attend these presentations.

Resources for All Students
The following resources may be of help to you when writing your literature reviews, research paper, and/or final exam.

Available on course website:

Not available on course website:

Course Policies
We will abide by two general policies throughout this course. First, as a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to follow the University's academic honesty policy (“A Culture of Honesty”) and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty” (including policies that cover plagiarism; for more information, see: [http://www.uga.edu/honesty](http://www.uga.edu/honesty)). Students are responsible for informing themselves about these standards before performing any academic work and may direct any specific questions they have regarding the policy (or its application to course assignments) to the instructor.

Second, it should go without saying that we will treat everyone in the class (and their comments) with respect. It is normal to disagree in an academic setting. In fact, many of the scholars that we will read regularly disagree with one another. This disagreement, however, can (and must) occur respectfully. Towards the goal of creating a respectful classroom environment, students are expected to: (a) use language that does not insult others or their point of view, (b) keep cell phones turned off and put away during class meetings, and (c) use laptops brought to the classroom for educational purposes only (note that my preference, however, is to omit them altogether). Any student that does not follow these guidelines may be asked to leave the classroom. For more information, please see the University of Georgia's Code of Conduct ([http://www.uga.edu/judicialprograms/code_of_conduct/codeofconduct.pdf](http://www.uga.edu/judicialprograms/code_of_conduct/codeofconduct.pdf)) and its Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy ([http://www.uga.edu/goo/pdfs/NDAH.pdf](http://www.uga.edu/goo/pdfs/NDAH.pdf)).

As a final note, let me offer a caveat about course readings. The goal of this class is to familiarize students with theoretical and empirical developments in the field of international conflict management. Thus, the inclusion (or omission) of readings in the course syllabus does not constitute an endorsement (or rejection) of those readings' positions and arguments.

Course Schedule
The following pages contain a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. I recommend completing required readings for each topic in the order listed.
I. Foundations of International Conflict and Conflict Management

Week 1: Course Introduction & Field Overview (August 18)

*Question: What are we doing/studying? What is the value of our efforts to academics and to policy-makers?*


Week 2: Conflict Management Overview (August 25)

*Questions: What is conflict management/resolution? What is the demand for conflict management? How is it changing?*

- Background: Bercovitch and Jackson. Chapter 1.

*Additional Reading:*


Week 3: Theories and Foundations of International Conflict (September 1)

*Questions: What causes violence? Where are the theoretical openings for managing conflicts in light of these causes?*


**Additional Reading:**

**Conflict Data:**
• Uppsala Conflict Data Program. Online at: http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/.

II. The Theory and Tools of Conflict Management

**Week 4: Management, Resolution, and Evaluation (September 8)**

*Questions: Should we prioritize management or resolution? Are there different kinds of peace? If so, what are they, and how do we obtain them? How should we evaluate peace efforts?*

• Blum, Chapters 1 (Conceptual Framework), 2 (India/Pakistan), and 5 (Testing Theory).
• Kupchan, Chapters 1-3 (Stable Peace, Anarchy to Cooperation, Rapprochement) and 7 (Making Friends).

**Additional reading:**

**Week 5: Theories of Conflict Management (September 15)**

**Question:** What are the theoretical mechanisms that facilitate and/or hinder peace?


**Additional Reading:**


**Data:**


**Broad Conflict Management Datasets:**


III. Tools and Topics of International Conflict Management

**Extra Topic: Conflict Prevention (Forecasting and the Use of Nonviolent Outlets)**

**Questions:** Can we forecast violence in order to prevent it? Can we offer nonviolent alternatives?


**Background:** Bercovitch and Jackson, Chapter 7.

**Additional Reading:**
• Special Issue on Nonviolence. (2013) *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3).

**Data:**

**Week 6: Negotiations (September 22)**

**Questions:** What is negotiation? How does it work in theory and in practice?


• Background: Bercovitch and Jackson, Chapter 2.

**Additional Reading:**


**Week 7: Mediation I (September 29)**

**Questions: What is mediation? How does it work in theory and in practice?**

• Beardsley, Chapters 1-7.

• Background: Bercovitch and Jackson, Chapter 3.

**Additional Reading:**


**Week 8: Mediation II (October 6)**

**Questions: When do mediators/disputants permit mediation? Who mediates, and why?**


Additional Reading:


Data:

Week 9: Legal Strategies (October 13)

*Questions: What are legal strategies? How do they work in theory and in practice?*

• Mitchell and Powell, Chapters 1, 3, 5-6.


• Background: Bercovitch and Jackson, Chapter 4.

Additional Reading:


**Week 10: Peace Operations (October 20)**

*Questions: What are peace operations? What do they do? Under what conditions do they succeed/fail?*


• Background: Bercovitch and Jackson, Chapter 6.

**Additional Reading:**


Data:


Week 11: Organizations, Coercion, and Humanitarian Problems (October 27)

Questions: How do institutions differ from other conflict managers? Can coercive strategies manage conflict?


Background: Bercovitch and Jackson, Chapters 5, 8 & 9.

Additional Reading:

Data:


Week 12: Forum Selection and Interdependence Among Strategies (November 3)

Questions: How do actors choose among conflict management strategies? How are strategies interdependent?


Additional reading:


Week 13: The Durability of Peace (November 10)

Questions: What factors undermine durable peace? How might we address them?


**Additional Reading:**

**IV. Conflict Resolution**

**Week 14: Reconciliation and Reconstruction (November 17)**

*Questions: Should we rebuild society after conflict? If so, how?*
• Background: Bercovitch and Jackson, Chapters 11 & 12.
Additional Reading:


Data:


Notable (Comprehensive) Anthologies:


Week 15: Student Presentations (December 1)