

HSS 404
Theories of Global Politics: Conflict Resolution
Fall 2013

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11:30 am – 1 pm
Class meeting times: Tues. and
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“The purpose of all war is peace.”
St. Augustine

This course is a structured and coherent investigation of the salient approaches to the study of international conflict and peacemaking. Conflict resolution is the process of attempting to resolve a dispute or a conflict, in our case, at the interstate level. This may involve conflict management in which the parties continue the conflict but with less extreme duties; settlement in which they reach agreement on enough issues that the conflict stops; or removal of the underlying causes of conflict—“resolution,” usually by means of creative diplomatic techniques.

Conflict itself has both positive and negative outcomes. Practitioners in the field of conflict resolution seek to find ways to promote positive outcomes and minimize the negative ones. Sometimes stalled or dysfunctional peace processes thwart negotiations and new strategies for rejuvenating or reorienting have to be devised. There exists an enormous body of literature on this subject with considerable confusion and competition among proponents of various approaches. Moreover—precisely because of this confusion—vital links of communication among various schools of thought either have never existed or have broken down.

A further aim of this course is to help students understand and thus help to build and repair these communication links, in the process helping you identify your own position and viewpoints within the epistemology of international relations as a whole. The objective is not to produce a “definitive” mode of analysis but to encourage thought about the interconnections between and among various conceptual approaches to war, conflict management and the modalities of sustainable peace settlements.

Assignments

HSS 404 requires one book review (6 pages minimum in length) based on a book relating to the themes of the course, chosen by the student (with Professor’s approval) but not one of the course texts. This is due at the beginning of class on **Tuesday, October 15** and it will count for 20 percent of the final grade. Book review guidelines will be provided. Novels, autobiographies, memoirs are **not acceptable**. The review has to be handed in at the beginning of class—hard copy, not email. Moreover, students are required to prepare a properly documented and researched paper of 15-20 pages on a topic relevant to the course, which they select with Professor’s approval. This is worth 40 percent of the final grade. (Note: Internet sources for this paper must be kept to a minimum. No more than two per paper. Otherwise

marks will be deducted.) The essay must be submitted at the beginning of class on Tuesday, December 3. An essay guideline will be provided. There will also be a midterm exam worth 30 percent of the final grade (date to be decided).

Mark Distribution

Book Review	20% (due October 15)
Research Essay	40% (due December 3)
Midterm Exam	30% (date to be determined)
Class Participation	10%

Class Texts

John W. Burton, Conflict Resolution: Its Language and Processes (London, 1996).

Roger MacGinty, No War, No Peace: The Rejuvenation of Stalled Peace Processes and Peace Accords (Palgrave/McMillan, London, 2006).

Frank R. Pfetsch, Negotiating Political Conflicts (Palgrave, London, 2007).

Peter Wallensteen, Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System (NY, 2007).

I. Syllabus (Background)

- i) The Nation State and Nationalism
- ii) Power and Capabilities
- iii) State Interests
- iv) Conflict and Alignment
- v) The Structure of Wars

II. International Political Processes

- i) Diplomacy and Negotiation
- ii) Diplomatic Theory
- iii) Types of Diplomacy
- iv) Deterrence and Collective Security
- v) War and War Aims
- vi) Alliances and Peacemaking
- vii) Interstate Organizations

III. Justice and Expedience in International Relations

IV. Conflict Transformation

V. The Balance of Power

VI. Methods of War Termination

- i) Mediation
- ii) Negotiation
- iii) Arbitration
- iv) Communication
- v) Reconciliation

VII. Intractable Conflicts (i.e. ethnic, religious) and the Role of Ideology

VIII. Conflict Resolution in the Future

Printed supplements and suggestions for further reading will be distributed in class.

Policies

- This is an **intellectually demanding course** and all students will be expected to do all the readings listed in the syllabus and start work on their written assignments before the submission date.
- Assignments **MUST** be submitted on time. Excuses for work submitted late will **not** be accepted (medical reasons, death in family apart) and there will be **no** exceptions. Late submissions will have grades deducted (one grade per day of lateness) unless a valid reason given (i.e. illness, supported by a doctor's note). This point **must** be clearly understood before students **agree** to take this class. Last minute pleas based on undocumented reasons **will** be rejected.
- Assignments submitted **must** conform to the specific category stated in this syllabus i.e. an essay is an essay, not a book review. Essay topics are **chosen by the student, subject to Professor's approval**. For the book review, autobiographies or works of fiction are not acceptable.
- It is the **student's** responsibility to ascertain that all assignments have been duly submitted and all required term work completed **prior** to the end of the semester. By signing the attendance sheets students explicitly **acknowledge** their understanding and **acceptance** of this condition.
- Students **must not** put assignments under the professor's office door. Hard copy must be submitted on the due date at the beginning of the class or taken to the History office where the secretary will date stamp them. Again, no papers under any doors!

- Plagiarism in any written assignment will result in an automatic failure and will be reported to the Dean of Students. Book reviews should be 5-6 pages in length (title must be approved by instructor) and research papers between 15-20 pages, excluding bibliography. Web sources for the essay must be kept to a minimum (no more than **two**).
- When submitting the final paper, students must also hand in the first/second draft plus a copy of the notes used for the construction of the essay.
- There will be no “re-writing” of assignments (book review and/or essay). Students having problems with written English must consult the Humanities Dept. Writing Center (Cullimore, 4th floor) prior to handing in assignments.
- There will be no “make-up” exam. If you miss the final exam for any reasons other than those applying to written assignments listed above, you will receive an F.
- All submitted work must contain the following signed statement: **I have fully complied with the NJIT Honor Code. Signed: Your Name.**