

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
CONFLICT AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION MASTER'S PROGRAM

CRES 625: PSYCHOLOGY OF CONFLICT

Spring 2021

Class Meetings: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:15 P.M. – 3:45 p.m.
Zoom Meeting ID: 921 6864 8884 Passcode: 841271

Office Hours: Tuesday 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. or by appointment
Zoom Meeting ID: 993 2471 4448 Passcode: 304671

Faculty: Dr. Erik Girvan
Phone: (541) 346-8934
E-mail: girvan@uoregon.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The field of conflict resolution is one that draws from a variety of interdisciplinary arenas and perspectives. A great deal of the foundational theory and practice within the sphere of conflict resolution roots in psychology, particularly, social psychology. This class will explore an empirically grounded perspective on the psychological dimensions of intra-personal, interpersonal, intra- and inter-group conflict. It is intended to provide an overview of issues related to human aggression, conflict, violence, and peace based on the premise that an understanding of these issues can contribute to a greater understanding of and ability to manage conflict between individuals, groups and societies. In this capacity, we will examine a variety of psychological concepts and how they relate to both the theory and practice of conflict resolution.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

CRES 625 is intended to increase students' knowledge and skills related to conflict resolution. As a class we will be attempting to practice and model the concepts that we are studying. Some of the knowledge and skills that will enhance this learning experience include:

- Making theoretical, empirical, and practical connections across disciplines
- Identifying and challenging hidden assumptions
- Integrating personal experiences and values with the theories and concepts discussed
- Reflective learning and active engagement
- Openness and respect towards diverse cultures, opinions, and orientations

In addition, there are certain objectives built into this class. These include:

- To increase understanding of the psychological causes and consequences of conflict at levels ranging from the interpersonal to the international.
- To strengthen understanding of the social environment in which negotiations, mediations, facilitations, and other processes for managing conflict occur in order to improve the thoughtful and strategic use of these processes by applying psychological principles and tools to them.
- To stimulate critical reflection on the values implicit in psychological approaches to conflict, violence, and peace.
- To strengthen skills of collaborative problem solving and communication regarding practical problems of conflict resolution.
- To learn the processes of and engage in constructive dialogue on the implications of the psychology of conflict, violence, and peace.
- To stimulate deep reflection on the link between one's own development, personality and behavior and the construction of peace at multiple levels.
- To make strong links between theory and practice in the understanding of the psychology of conflict resolution.

COURSE TEXTS

Readings as assigned, available via databases to which you have access through UO. I recommend searching for them with Google Scholar (<http://scholar.google.com/>) while on campus physically or virtually using VPN.

Your Responsibilities:

- *Be Prepared.* This course requires comprehension, not memorization. It is expected that you will prepare for each class session not just by completing the assigned readings for the session, but by engaging with them and their implications, as well as completing any written work for which you are responsible.
- *Take the Initiative.* Successful professionals are independently inquisitive and thorough. You are ultimately responsible for your own learning. If you do not know or understand something, take the time to find it out. Moreover, to get the most out of the class, you should work hard to question the perspectives that you are inclined to agree with as much if not more so that those with which you disagree.
- *Be Respectful.* This course is an introduction to the psychology of conflict. Most if not all of what we will be studying applies to each of us. Discussion and debate are encouraged. Insults, *ad hominem* arguments, interrupting, monopolizing the conversation, tardiness, engaging in distracting diversions, and other signs of disrespect for your colleagues, myself, or the educational process are unprofessional and will not be tolerated.
- *Push Yourself.* I will work hard to make this class a worthwhile experience and expect you to do the same.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

During the term, you will be responsible for completing:

- Participation in Discussion Threads
- Four of Five *Reflection and Application (Response) Papers*
- One *Term Paper*
- One *Paper Presentation*

a) Participation in Discussion Threads

Due (submit via course website): 11:00 a.m. on the dates noted in the syllabus.

Assignment: Participate in discussion threads on topics noted in the syllabus.

Assessment: Completion of at least one post in each discussion thread.

b) Reflection and Application Papers (2-3 pages each)

Due (submit via course website): 11:00 a.m. on the date noted in the syllabus.

Assignment: One of the major challenges of moving from theory to practice is developing an understanding of the former that enables you to recognize its operation in actual situations. For each paper you will get a prompt. Your task is to review the materials in the prompt and then (a) briefly summarize at least one psychological theory or processes covered in the course material for the relevant topic, including relevant citation(s) to that material; (b) explain how the theory or process relates to the information in the prompt (e.g., the implications of the theory or processes for the development, maintenance, or resolution of the conflict described in the prompt); and (c) draw on your own experiences to reflect and discuss whether and how knowledge of the psychological theory or processes can improve your understanding of the dynamics involved in conflict. In completing the assignments you may be as accepting, questioning, or critical of the course material as you like. The main requirement is that you demonstrate that you have engaged substantively with the course material on the topic and can apply it to novel, real-world situations.

Assessment: Reflection and Application Papers will be assessed on the quality of writing, the level of integration and analysis, the ability to demonstrate conflict resolution perspectives in your analysis, the accurate use of APA format, and the demonstrated mastery of knowledge and content covered in class.

c) Term Paper (10-15 pages)

Due (submit via course website): 5:00 p.m. on the date noted in the syllabus

Assignment: Write a substantive paper involving one or more of the theoretical frameworks covered in the course. Acceptable formats include, but are not limited to: (a) a review of the research on a psychological theory and evaluation of its applicability to conflict management, (b) an academic essay evaluating, critiquing, or examining an approach to conflict resolution based upon insights from the psychological theory, (c) a detailed case study of a contemporary conflict or series of conflicts in which you draw on material covered in the course to explain or provide a better understanding of the dynamics involved in the conflict, or (d) a research proposal for a study or series of studies designed to test or extend our understanding of the psychology of conflict.

Assessment: Term Papers will be assessed on the quality of writing, the level of integration and analysis, the ability to demonstrate conflict resolution perspectives in your analysis, the accurate use of APA format, and the demonstrated mastery of knowledge and content covered in class.

d) Paper Presentation

Due: In class on the date noted in the syllabus

Assignment: The presentation will follow the general rules, format, and assessment criteria of the Three Minute Thesis competition, which can be found here: <http://threeminutethesis.org/>.

GRADING

As this class is designed to emphasize both process and content, evaluation will be based on a combination of factors related to your participation. Your grade will be assessed as follows:

- Class Participation and Class Discussion Posts: 20%
- Reflection and Application Papers: 20% (4 of 5)
- Final Paper: 50%
- Paper Presentation: 10%

COURSE POLICIES

Classroom Methodology: This course will use a multi-modal methodology that includes lectures, multimedia presentations, small group discussions, large group dialogue, and reflection on critical issues related to peace, conflict, and violence. As conflict resolution work itself requires flexibility and attention to process dynamics, the class will model the ability to do just this as the need arises. In this regard, students are encouraged to be active participants in the evolution of the class. The goal for this class is to be informative, challenging, stimulating, and fun.

Accessible Education for All Students: The University of Oregon works to ensure inclusive learning environments for all students. We recognize that students bring a variety of learning styles to the course, and that some learning styles may require adjustment to course structure. We are happy to talk with you about such

adjustments. Please be in touch with the professor if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your participation as a result of learning style or diagnosed disability. If this course involves anonymous grading, please contact Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Nicole Commissiong, for information on accommodations. For more information, you are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center (formerly Disability Services) in 164 Oregon Hall at 346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Inclusion and Collegiality: Our community values inclusion. We are committed to equal opportunities for all faculty, staff, and students to develop individually, professionally, and academically regardless of ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic standing, cultural beliefs and traditions. We are dedicated to an environment that is inclusive and fosters awareness, understanding, and respect for diversity. If you feel excluded or threatened, please contact Associate Dean of Students Jennifer Espinola at espinola@uoregon.edu or 541-346-1557. The University Bias Response Team is also a resource that can assist you. See <http://bias.uoregon.edu> or call 541-346-2037.

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to demonstrate high levels of academic integrity and professionalism, and are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be grounds for automatic failure in the course. If you have questions about conduct please ask your instructor or review the University Student Conduct Code (available at <http://conduct.uoregon.edu>) or the UO policy at http://www.uoregon.edu/~stl/programs/student_judi_affairs/conduct-code.htm.

Attendance and Participation: This class is designed to be highly interactive, so that class attendance and participation will be an integral component of your grade. If you are late or absent, the whole class is impacted. Full and timely attendance is expected and unexcused absences will count against your grade. Weekly reading must be completed in order to fully participate in class discussions. Evaluation will be based on the degree and quality of class participation and the successful completion of class assignments. Incompletes are not an option except in cases of extenuating circumstances. Incompletes must be negotiated with the professor and a deadline set for completion of all work.

Computer Use: Computers are a necessary part of the class and much of professional life. They are also a constant source of distraction. Checking email or surfing the web during class time is disrespectful. Work to stay focused and engaged.

COURSE SCHEDULE

| Topic 1 | |
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| Introduction, Class Overview, Psychological Meta-Theory & Theory | |
| 3/29 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus & Expectations • Defining Conflict Behavior <p>Christie, D. (2006). What is Peace Psychology the Psychology of? <i>Journal of Social Issues</i>, 62, 1, 1-17.</p> <p>Christie, D., Tint, B., Wagner, D. and Winter, D. (2008). Peace Psychology for a Peaceful World. <i>American Psychologist</i>, 63, 540-552.</p> |
| 3/31 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meta-Theory: The social psychological perspective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Behavior is a function of the person and the situation that they are in: $B = f(P \times S)$ ○ Moderation and mediation ○ Empirical methods <p>Furr, R.M. & Funder, D.C. (2018). Persons, situations, and person-situation interactions. <i>Handbook of Personality: Theory & Research</i> (4th Ed). New York: Guilford. (pp. 1-30)</p> <p>Discussion Post</p> |
| 4/5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of psychological theories <p>Friend, W., & Malhotra, D. (2019). Psychological Barriers to Resolving Intergroup Conflict: An Extensive Review and Consolidation of the Literature. <i>Negotiation Journal</i>, 35(4), 407-442.</p> <p><u>Reflection and Application Paper #1</u></p> |
| Topic 2: The Person and Groups | |

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| 4/7 | <p style="text-align: center;">A. <u>Evolution and Individual Differences in Conflict Styles</u></p> <p>Van Vugt, M., & Park, J. H. (2009). Guns, germs, and sex: how evolution shaped our intergroup psychology. <i>Social and Personality Psychology Compass</i>, 3(6), 927-938.</p> <p>Rahim, M. A. (1983). A measure of styles of handling interpersonal conflict. <i>Academy of Management journal</i>, 26(2), 368-376.</p> <p>Elsayed-Ekjiouly, S. M., & Buda, R. (1996). Organizational conflict: A comparative analysis of conflict styles across cultures. <i>International Journal of Conflict Management</i>, 7(1), 71-81.</p> <p>Discussion Post</p> |
| 4/12 | <p style="text-align: center;">B. <u>Identity and Group Formation</u></p> <p>McLeod, S. (2019). Social Identity Theory. SimplyPsychology. Accessible: https://www.simplypsychology.org/social-identity-theory.html</p> <p>Hornsey, M. J. (2008). Social identity theory and self-categorization theory: A historical review. <i>Social and Personality Psychology Compass</i>, 2(1), 204-222.</p> <p>Livingstone, A., & Haslam, S. A. (2008). The importance of social identity content in a setting of chronic social conflict: Understanding intergroup relations in Northern Ireland. <i>British Journal of Social Psychology</i>, 47(1), 1-21.</p> |
| 4/14 | <p>Realistic Group Conflict Theory. Psychology. Accessible: https://psychology.iresearchnet.com/social-psychology/social-psychology-theories/realistic-group-conflict-theory/</p> <p>Jackson, J. W. (1993). Realistic group conflict theory: A review and evaluation of the theoretical and empirical literature. <i>The Psychological Record</i>, 43, 395.</p> <p>Zárate, M. A., Garcia, B., Garza, A. A., & Hitlan, R. T. (2004). Cultural threat and perceived realistic group conflict as dual predictors of prejudice. <i>Journal of experimental social psychology</i>, 40(1), 99-105.</p> <p>Discussion Post</p> |

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| 4/19 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>C. Individual Differences and Group Conflict</u></p> <p>Pratto, F., & Stewart, A. L. (2011). Social dominance theory. <i>The Encyclopedia of Peace Psychology</i>. (pp. 1-4).</p> <p>Feldman, S. (2003). Enforcing social conformity: A theory of authoritarianism. <i>Political Psychology</i>, 24(1), 41-74.</p> <p>Duckitt, J. (2006). Differential effects of right wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation on outgroup attitudes and their mediation by threat from and competitiveness to outgroups. <i>Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin</i>, 32(5), 684-696.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Reflection and Application Paper #2</u></p> |
| 4/21 | <p>Thomsen, L., Green, E. G., & Sidanius, J. (2008). We will hunt them down: How social dominance orientation and right-wing authoritarianism fuel ethnic persecution of immigrants in fundamentally different ways. <i>Journal of Experimental Social Psychology</i>, 44(6), 1455-64.</p> <p>Smith, A. G. (2008). The implicit motives of terrorist groups: How the needs for affiliation and power translate into death and destruction. <i>Political Psychology</i>, 29(1), 55-75.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Discussion Post</u></p> |
| | <p>Topic 3</p> <p>Biasing Effects of Group Affiliation and Conflict</p> |
| 4/26 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>A. Naive Realism/ Motivated Reasoning</u></p> <p>Pronin, E., Puccio, C., & Ross, L. (2002). 36. Understanding Misunderstanding: Social Psychological Perspectives. In <i>Heuristics and Biases: The Psychology of Intuitive Judgment</i>. 636-665.</p> <p>Pronin, E., Gilovich, T., & Ross, L. (2004). Objectivity in the eye of the beholder: divergent perceptions of bias in self versus others. <i>Psychological review</i>, 111(3), 781-799.</p> |

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| 4/28 | <p>Hastorf, A. H., & Cantril, H. (1954). They saw a game; a case study. <i>The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology</i>, 49(1), 129-134.</p> <p>Thompson, L. (1995). "They saw a negotiation": Partisanship and involvement. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 68(5), 839-853.</p> <p>Ahler, D. J., & Sood, G. (2018). The parties in our heads: Misperceptions about party composition and their consequences. <i>The Journal of Politics</i>, 80(3), 964-981.</p> <p>Discussion Post</p> |
| 5/3 | <p>Vallone, R. P., Ross, L., & Lepper, M. R. (1985). The hostile media phenomenon: biased perception and perceptions of media bias in coverage of the Beirut massacre. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 49(3), 577-585.</p> <p>Maoz, I., Ward, A., Katz, M., & Ross, L. (2002). Reactive devaluation of an "Israeli" vs. "Palestinian" peace proposal. <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i>, 46(4), 515-546.</p> <p>Kahan, D. M., Peters, E., Dawson, E. C., & Slovic, P. (2013). Motivated numeracy and enlightened self-government. <i>Yale Law School, Public Law Working Paper</i>, (307).</p> |
| 5/5 | <p>Hart, P. S., & Nisbet, E. C. (2012). Boomerang effects in science communication: How motivated reasoning and identity cues amplify opinion polarization about climate mitigation policies. <i>Communication Research</i>, 39, 701-723.</p> <p>Druckman, J. N., & Bolsen, T. (2011). Framing, motivated reasoning, and opinions about emergent technologies. <i>Journal of Communication</i>, 61(4), 659-688.</p> <p>Discussion Post</p> |

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| 5/10 | <p>B. <u>Dehumanization</u></p> <p>Maiese, M. (2003) Dehumanization http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/dehumanization</p> <p>Haslam, N., & Loughnan, S. (2014). Dehumanization and infrahumanization. <i>Annual review of psychology</i>, 65, 399-423.</p> <p>Oren, N., & Bar-Tal, D. (2007). The detrimental dynamics of delegitimization in intractable conflicts: The Israeli–Palestinian case. <i>International Journal of Intercultural Relations</i>, 31(1), 111-126.</p> <p><u>Reflection and Application Paper #3</u></p> |
| 5/12 | <p>Burgess, H. (2003) <i>Enemy Images</i>. https://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/enemy_image</p> <p>Goff, P. A., Jackson, M. C., Di Leone, B. A. L., Culotta, C. M., & DiTomasso, N. A. (2014). The essence of innocence: Consequences of dehumanizing Black children. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 106, 526-545.</p> <p>Dickert, S., Västfjäll, D., Kleber, J., & Slovic, P. (2012). Valuations of human lives: normative expectations and psychological mechanisms of (ir) rationality. <i>Synthese</i>, 189(1), 95-105.</p> <p><u>Discussion Post</u></p> |

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| 5/17 | <p style="text-align: center;">C. Emotion</p> <p>Bar-Tal, D. (2004) <i>Psychological Dynamics of Intractable Conflict</i> http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/psychological-dynamics</p> <p>Lindner, Evelin G. (2006). Emotion and Conflict: Why It Is Important to Understand How Emotions Affect Conflict and How Conflict Affects Emotions. In Deutsch, Morton, Coleman, Peter T., and Marcus, Eric C. (Eds.), <i>The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice. Second edition</i>. Chapter twelve, pp. 268-293, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.</p> <p>Halperin, E., & Gross, J. J. (2010). Intergroup anger in intractable conflict: Long-term sentiments predict anger responses during the Gaza war. <i>Group Processes & Intergroup Relations</i>, 14, 477-488.</p> <p>Discussion Post</p> |
| | <p>Topic 4 Efforts at Resolution</p> |
| 5/19 | <p>Spangler, B. & Burgess, H. (2017) <i>Competitive and Cooperative Approaches to Conflict</i> https://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/competitive_cooperative_frames</p> <p>Bazerman, M. H., Curhan, J. R., Moore, D. A., & Valley, K. L. (2000). Negotiation. <i>Annual Review of Psychology</i>, 51(1), 279-314.</p> <p>Lord, C. G., Lepper, M. R., & Preston, E. (1984). Considering the opposite: a corrective strategy for social judgment. <i>Journal of Personality and Social psychology</i>, 47(6), 1231-1243.</p> <p><u>Reflection and Application Paper #4</u></p> |

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| 5/24 | <p>Pruitt, D. G., & Lewis, S. A. (1975). Development of integrative solutions in bilateral negotiation. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 31(4), 621-633.</p> <p>De Dreu, C. K., Koole, S. L., & Steinel, W. (2000). Unfixing the fixed pie: A motivated information-processing approach to integrative negotiation. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, 79(6), 975-987.</p> <p>Van Boven, L., & Thompson, L. (2003). A look into the mind of the negotiator: Mental models in negotiation. <i>Group Processes & Intergroup Relations</i>, 6(4), 387-404.</p> |
| 5/26 | <p>Pettigrew, T. F. (1998). Intergroup contact theory. <i>Annual Review of Psychology</i>, 49(1), 65-85.</p> <p>Blader, S. L., & Tyler, T. R. (2003). A four-component model of procedural justice: Defining the meaning of a “fair” process. <i>Personality and social psychology bulletin</i>, 29(6), 747-758.</p> <p>Wood, G., Tyler, T. R., & Papachristos, A. V. (2020). Procedural justice training reduces police use of force and complaints against officers. <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i>, 117(18), 9815-9821.</p> <p>Discussion Post</p> |
| 5/31 | <p>Ross, L., & Stitinger, C. (1991). Barriers to conflict resolution. <i>Negotiation Journal</i>, 7(4), 389-404.</p> <p>Deutsch, M. (1994). Constructive conflict resolution: Principles, training, and research. <i>Journal of social issues</i>, 50(1), 13-32.</p> <p><u>Reflection and Application Paper #5</u></p> |
| 6/2 | <p>In-Class Presentations of Papers</p> |
| 6/5 | <p><u>Term Paper Due</u></p> |