

BSS 187/487 Seminar on Managing 21st Century Conflicts

Faculty

Prof Dr Schuyler Foerster, DPhil

Fulbright Distinguished Chair in Social Studies, Department of Political Science

240648@mail.muni.cz skyfoerster@gmail.com

Course Schedule

When: Every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 8:00 – 9:30 am

Note: This course begins on Tuesday, April 18, for four weeks, but not during the week of May 9-11. We will not meet on Fridays, except during the first week (April 21).

Where: FSS Room U-43

Course Objective

This course examines the changing nature of conflict in the 21st century and the unique challenges of managing those conflicts in the interests of international security. Through lectures, seminar discussions, and case studies, we will examine the following main topics:

- Historical nature of conflict and how conflict has changed in the 21st century
- Strategies for conflict management and resolution
- National sovereignty and the role of international institutions

This course will feature both simulations in which students will work in groups to address emerging conflicts and to devise strategies for their effective management, as well as group case study and presentation..

Course Requirements

This course focuses on understanding and communicating complex concepts and applying them to the real world of policy. There is **no** midterm or final examination.

Students are expected to complete a reasonable—but not excessive—amount of reading; to engage intellectually with the course material; to participate actively in seminar discussions; to write clearly in two short essays addressing questions in the

syllabus; to participate actively in a conflict management, role-playing simulation and to work in a team to research a case study and make a class presentation.

Students will receive a final letter grade for the semester based on the following components, with a total possible of 100 points:

- **Written essays (40 points):**

Early in the course, and again at the end, there will be **two** essays—each described in the syllabus. Each will be worth a maximum of **20** points and should be approximately 750-1,000 words, typed, double-spaced.

- **Conflict Management Simulation and Point Paper (15 points):**

In the second week of the course, students will participate as part of a team in a conflict management simulation, details of which will be distributed in class. Each *team* will prepare a joint “point paper” outlining its goals, to be submitted at the beginning of class before the start of the simulation (Wednesday, 26 April). Teams will receive a maximum of **15** points for each team member based on their point papers **and** their performance in the simulation.

- **Case Study Research and Presentation (30 points):**

During the **first week** of the course (18-21 April), students will select one of the following six conflict issues in which they will work as a team to conduct research and make a class presentation:

- (1) Case Study in Sectarian Conflict – Libya
- (2) Case Study in Sectarian Conflict – Sudan
- (3) Case Study in International Terrorism – Afghanistan
- (4) Case Study in International Terrorism – ISIS
- (5) Case Study in Nuclear Proliferation – Iran
- (6) Case Study in Nuclear Proliferation – North Korea

In the **third week** of the course (2-4 May), each TEAM will present the results of their research to the rest of the class, in a 30-minute presentation including:

- (1) A brief description of the conflict and why it is important
- (2) An overview of attempts by the international community, regional organizations, and states to manage this conflict; and,
- (3) The results of those conflict management efforts.

All other students will be asked to evaluate each presentation and offer suggestions for improvement.

In the *final week of class—on Tuesday, May 16*—teams will submit a joint case study paper in class, reflecting their research and the feedback received from their presentations. Teams will receive a maximum of **10** points for their presentation and a maximum of **20** points for their final case study report.

- **Seminar preparation, engagement and participation (15 points):**

This course is a combination of lecture, discussion, and role-playing simulation; it requires your active participation. The classroom is an environment of academic freedom. You should feel free to challenge the ideas set forth by faculty members and your peers in a respectful and well-mannered fashion. Support your positions with sound analysis, evidence, and reason. Focus on developing better arguments; policy is a domain in which there are few “correct” answers. To succeed, students should:

- ✓ *Prepare* beforehand by completing (and digesting) the assigned readings;
- ✓ *Engage* in class, by actively paying attention to lecture and discussion, taking comprehensive notes on the class, and asking questions if you need assistance in understanding the course material;
- ✓ *Participate* in class discussions by offering thoughtful insights in a courteous manner; by asking good questions during class that aid the discussion or out of class with your professor; and by active participation in the simulations.

In this category, each student can earn up to **15** points, which your professor will determine using the following rubric:

- ✓ **14-15 points:** Regular and courteous engagement and participation; asking good questions; answering questions intelligently and thoughtfully; contributing insight; clearly keeping up with the readings.
- ✓ **10-13 points:** Clear engagement in class discussion by taking good notes, even if only occasionally participating actively in discussion; generally able to answer questions; keeping up with most of the reading; asking questions—either in or out of class—to help with understanding of the course material.
- ✓ **7-9 points:** Some engagement or participation in class; only occasional evidence of having understood the reading material; argumentative with little reason or evidence of one’s position

- ✓ **4-6 points:** Little or no participation; little or no evidence of having done the reading; passive demeanor or uncivil behavior in class
- ✓ **0-3 points:** No engagement in the course or evidence of preparation for class.

Grading

Based on 100 possible points in the course, I will assign final letter grades as follows:

- A: 90-100
- B: 80-89
- C: 70-79
- D: 60-69
- E: 50-59
- F: 0-49

Resources

We will draw from the following textbook, which is available in the MU Faculty of Social Sciences library, and which also includes resources useful for your case study research:

Crocker, Hampson, Aall (eds). *Rewiring Regional Security in a Fragmented*

World (US Institute of Peace, 2011) – *abbreviated as “Crocker” in the syllabus*

All other reading assignments will be available to you electronically as .pdf documents or as links to the Internet.

Please alert your professor if you have trouble accessing any of these materials.

Assignments

Specific assignments for each session of the course are on the following two pages.

Date	Subject & Assignment
Tue 18.4	The Legacy of Conflict in the 20th Century ✓ Course Syllabus <i>[posted in IS]</i>
Wed 19.4	Sources of Conflict in the 21st Century ✓ Andreani, <i>Global Conflict Management and the Pursuit of Peace</i> , in <i>Crocker</i> , Chapter 2, pp. 25-48 <i>[in FSS Library]</i> ✓ <i>Global Risks 2035: The Search for a New Normal</i> , Atlantic Council Strategy Paper, November 2016 <i>[posted in IS]</i> ✓ <i>Global Trends 2035: The Paradox of Progress</i> , U.S. National Intelligence Council Report, January 2017 <i>[posted in IS]</i>
Thu 20.4	International Institutions for Conflict Management & Resolution ✓ Charter of the United Nations, www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/un-charter-full-text/ ✓ Williams & Haake, <i>Regional Approaches to Conflict Management</i> , in <i>Crocker</i> , Chapter 3, pp. 75-111 <i>[in FSS Library]</i>
Fri 21.4	“Responsibility to Protect” ✓ <i>The Responsibility to Protect: Background & 2005 UN Summit Document</i> www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/about-responsibility-to-protect.html & ✓ <i>Responsibility to Protect, Rwanda Genocide & the UN</i> , www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/about/bgresponsibility.shtml ✓ Bellamy, <i>The Responsibility to Protect and the Problem of Military Intervention</i> , <i>International Affairs</i> (RIIA, July 2008) <i>[posted in IS]</i>
Tue 25.4	Peacekeeping – Peacemaking – Peace Enforcement – Peacebuilding ✓ Overview of UN Peacekeeping, www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/ ✓ Grieg & Diehl, “The Peacekeeping-Peacemaking Dilemma,” <i>International Studies Quarterly</i> , December 2005 <i>[posted in IS]</i> ✓ <u>Essay #1 Due in Class</u> <i>The changing nature of conflict in the 21st century has led to a new concept of “responsibility to protect,” which directly challenges the traditional view of state sovereignty. Explain and assess this argument.</i>
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SIMULATION	
Wed 26.4	<i>Conflict Management Simulation in Class – Part I</i> ✓ <u>TEAM Point Papers Due in Class</u>
Thu 27.4	<i>Conflict Management Simulation in Class – Part II</i>

TEAM CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS	
Tue 2.5	<p><i>Case Study Presentation – Civil/Sectarian Conflict (Libya)</i></p> <p><i>Case Study Presentation – Civil/Sectarian Conflict (Sudan)</i></p>
Wed 3.5	<p><i>Case Study Presentation – Terrorism (Afghanistan)</i></p> <p><i>Case Study Presentation – Terrorism (Syria)</i></p>
Thu 4.5	<p><i>Case Study Presentation – Nuclear Proliferation (Iran)</i></p> <p><i>Case Study Presentation – Nuclear Proliferation (North Korea)</i></p>
5.9 5.10 5.11	NO CLASS – Case Study Research & Final Essay Preparation
Tue 16.5	<p>Lessons Learned: Managing Future International Conflict</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <u>TEAM Case Study Papers Due in Class</u> ✓ <u>Essay #2 Due in Class</u> <p><i>Summarize and explain (with examples) what you believe are the three most important lessons for states and international institutions in managing future international conflict.</i></p>