CONF 665: Conflict Resolution in Complex Humanitarian Crises  
Dr. Mazur  
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Office Hours by Appointment

An Experiential Learning Class (Field Training Exercise or FTX)  
School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution  
George Mason University  
Arlington, VA  
Spring Semester 2015  3 credits  
Founders Hall Room 324

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<td>Wed–Sat</td>
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<td>Atlantic Hope Exercise, Treasure Coast Public Safety Training Center, Indian River State College, Fort Pierce, Florida</td>
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Course Description: This unique, hands-on class is designed to simulate a humanitarian crisis and create the learning environment where participants actively practice and demonstrate the skills needed to lead through a crisis. Students will deploy to a fictional, war-torn country. By assuming a series of roles and responsibilities, students together seek to formulate and implement strategies and interventions for managing a disaster in a “lived” scenario. The students experience common obstacles, disputes, and challenges that must be proactively addressed and resolved as the exercise unfolds.

Learning Objectives: Students will
- learn the skills and expertise needed to be a Conflict Resolution Professional who is working with and serving others under emergency conditions.
- come to understand the varied issues of disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.
- practice how to prevent or alleviate human suffering through the simulation of many facets of disaster operations.
- learn to analyze a multitude of interests, political concerns, and international and domestic issues. Students will understand and practice the skills of negotiating, mediating, organizing, and providing disaster relief services.
- Conduct a self-reflective analysis of the role of the Conflict Resolution Professional in a humanitarian crisis and analyze how practitioners can work better with others to design strategic plans for controlling violence and resolving conflict.
Class Meeting Times and Readings

I. **Friday February 20  7-9:30 pm**
   **Introduction & Anatomy of a Crisis: Narratives, Framing & Meaning Making**
   Read before class: Boin, Arjen et al. The Politics of Crisis Management: Public Leadership Under Pressure, pp. 69-88
   Button, Gregory. Disaster Culture: Knowledge and Uncertainty in the Wake of Human and Environmental Catastrophe, pp. 11-18; 149-166
   Perrow, Charles. Normal Accidents, pp. 3-31 & 62-100

II. **Friday February 27  7-9:30 pm**
    **Who Should Intervene and How?**
    Read before class: Study Materials involving the simulation and fictional country of Atlantica
    [http://humanitariantraining.org/Humanitarian_Training/The_Black_Swan.html](http://humanitariantraining.org/Humanitarian_Training/The_Black_Swan.html)

III. **Friday March 6  7-9:30 pm**
    **How Does One Prepare?**

IV. **Wednesday March 11-Saturday March 14**
    **Field Training Exercise** Indian River State College, Fort Pierce, Florida
    Mayer, Bernard S. *The Dynamics of Conflict a Guide to Engagement and Intervention*, pp. 211-68.

V. **Friday March 27  7-9:30 pm**
    **How Do We Measure Resiliency & How Do We Capture Learning from the Last Disaster?**
VI. **Friday April 10  7-9:30 pm**  
**Final Presentations & Wrap Up**

Jeong, Peacebuilding Design, Chpt. 7, in Approaches to Peacebuilding, pp. 147-170.

**Grading:** Your grade in this class will be determined as follows:

- Class Participation: 20%
- Journal: 20%
- Field Experience Participation: 20%
- Oral Presentation: 20%
- Final Paper: 20%

**Journal**

You will have an ongoing writing assignment, i.e., keeping a journal of your reactions to class, the readings, and the field experience. This should reflect your analysis of and reflections on what you are learning and experiencing.

**Class Participation/Attendance Policy**

Forty percent (40%) of your grade will be based on class and field participation. Because of the nature of this course, it is vital that you attend and are well-prepared for each class. Your participation will include leading class discussions and reporting on key readings. Participation will reflect thoughtful reactions to the readings and class discussions.

**Final Paper**

By March 16, please submit a short statement of your thesis or topic. Please select a domestic or international disaster and analyze it from any perspective you prefer, e.g., environmental, media coverage, economic issues, leadership issues, etc. You may also select an issue and compare two different disasters. The role of conflict analysis and resolution must figure prominently in your research and analysis. Your paper should reflect your own thoughts and analysis. Most papers will be around 10-15 pages long (double spaced). **Paper Deadline: Your final paper is due by noon on April 13.**

**Class Presentation**

Students will present an abstract of their paper during a class period. Each presentation should be about 10 minutes. Please schedule a time with Dr. Mazur to discuss your topic: 202.646.4094 or cmazur1@gmu.edu.

**George Mason Plagiarism Policy**

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for
review. George Mason takes plagiarism very seriously. Although great ideas are advanced through collaboration, please be very careful in your work for this class to ensure proper attribution of sources.

**Bibliography And Additional Reading**

(Many available free online)


Berkeland and Vermeulen, *Camp Management Toolkit* (Norwegian Red Cross, 2004) [http://www.nrc.no/?did=9380550](http://www.nrc.no/?did=9380550)


