

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

**CONFLICT ASSESSMENT AND PREVENTION
SIS-696-020/ SIS-419-030**

Spring 2010

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Time: Monday, 05:30PM-08:00PM
Venue: Watkins Room G08
Office Hours: Monday: 12:00-3:00PM,
Wednesday 3:00-6:00PM

DESCRIPTION

This course explores contemporary approaches to conflict assessment and the challenges of preventing the outbreak of armed conflict. It provides an overview of recent conflict assessment frameworks offered by various organizations and considers a variety of theoretical and empirical tools essential to understanding the causes of violent conflict, and options for developing effective conflict prevention capacity at both the structural and operational levels. It also explores the conceptual as well as operational difficulties associated with predicting the outbreak of conflict (through early warning system design) and the challenge of turning early warning into appropriate preventive action. It invites student to consider best practices in conflict prevention as practiced by several actors, including local and national governments, NGOs, civil society organizations, donor agencies, the United Nations, and regional political organizations. Our overall aim is to fully understand the value of conflict prevention in contemporary global crisis management, and to deepen our knowledge of the comparative merits of the various tools and concepts associated with conflict prevention.

Course Objectives

Our objectives are as follows:

- To become familiar with various theories underlying the practice of conflict prevention
- To develop a better understanding of the value and place of conflict assessment in effective conflict prevention
- To deepen our knowledge of the range of conflict assessment models, and to understand the comparative merits of the most commonly used models

- To become familiar with various approaches to operational and structural prevention
- To deepen our knowledge of best-practices in conflict prevention as practiced at various levels by national governments, NGOs, civil society organizations, donor agencies, the United Nations, and regional political organizations.
- To deepen our understanding of early warning systems, and their role in effective prevention
- To gain awareness of the challenges (conceptual and operational) associated with developing a reliable early-warning system, and of translating early warning into early action

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to demonstrate comprehension of the various theories and concepts that underlie contemporary practice and study of conflict prevention.
- They will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the role that conflict assessment plays in effective prevention.
- They will be able to demonstrate knowledge of various conflict assessment models employed by governmental and non-governmental actors.
- They will be able to conduct peace and conflict assessment exercises by applying a variety of assessment tools.
- They will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the differences between tools and concepts associated with structural prevention and those associated with operational prevention.
- They will be able to evaluate the conflict prevention policies and activities of actors such as national governments, NGOs, civil society organizations, donor agencies, the United Nations, and regional political organizations.
- They will be able to design/ or test early warning systems.
- They will be able to synthesize best practices and lessons in effective early warning and early response to conflict at the domestic and international levels.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- No textbook is required for this class.
- All assigned reading will be made available on Blackboard.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed in four ways:

- **Attendance and participation (10%):**

Class attendance is mandatory. The Professor should be notified ahead of time of any excusable absence. Students are expected to come prepared to actively participate in class discussions and all exercises. You will earn points (up to 10% of your final grade) for active participation in class.

- **Short Papers (30%)**

Students will write three very short papers (no more than 2 pages each) on conflict assessment, early warning, and missed opportunities to prevent conflict. Each paper will be worth up to 10% for a total of 30% of the final grade. The papers will be organized as follows:

- **Conflict assessment report:** the first paper will analyze the Darfur conflict by employing one of 5 assessment schemes studied in class. It will be due in class on February 1
- **Early warning system design:** the second paper will propose an early warning system for detecting / predicting one of the following: electoral violence in Ivory Coast, political conflict in Post-Fidel Cuba, religious conflict in France, territorial conflict in post-referendum Sudan, and escalation in the Israel-Hezbollah conflict. It will be due on February 22.
- **Missed opportunities paper:** the third paper will identify and discuss missed opportunities to prevent conflict in Rwanda. It will be due on March 22.

- **Group project & presentation (20%)**

Each student will join one of 5 groups charged with the task of developing a Conflict Prevention Action Plan for one of the following: electoral violence in Ivory Coast, political conflict in Post-Fidel Cuba, religious conflict in France, territorial conflict in post-referendum Sudan, and the Israel-Hezbollah conflict. Each group will present its findings in class on April 19, and also submit a 3-5 page paper for grading on the same day. The presentation and the paper will be worth up to 10% each for a total of 20%.

- **Final Exam (40%)**

The final exam will be a take-home exam. It will test students' ability to connect themes explored in class to real life conflict situations. It will give you a chance to showcase your analytic and critical thinking skills through essays that reflect theories and issues discussed in class. The exam will be due by email on May 3, and worth up 40% of your final grade.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are governed by American University's Academic Integrity Code, which details specific violations of ethical conduct that relate to academic integrity. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. All of your work (whether oral or written) in this class is governed by the provisions of the Code. Academic violations, particularly plagiarism, have been increasing in recent years, partly due to web sites and other sources that offer information or papers that students can submit as their own work.

Defined by the Code, plagiarism is using the work, ideas, or words of someone else without attribution. Other violations include inappropriate collaboration (working on a project with another person but not acknowledging her or his contribution), dishonesty in examinations, whether in class or take-home, dishonesty in papers (not submitting original work), work done for one course and submitted to another, deliberate falsification of data, interference with other students' work, and copyright violations. The adjudication process and possible penalties are listed in American University's Academic Integrity Code booklet, which is also available on the American University web site.

The Instructor has the responsibility to monitor course assignments for violations of academic integrity, and the right to submit any suspicious assignments for electronic analysis to detect such violations. Being a member of this academic community entitles each of us to a wide

degree of freedom in the pursuit of scholarly interests; with that freedom, however, comes a responsibility to uphold the ethical standards of scholarly conduct.

STATEMENT ON DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please don't hesitate to consult with me. In addition to the resources of the department, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.

Academic Support Center (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities. Writing support is available in the ASC Writing Lab or in the Writing Center, Battelle 228.

Counseling Center (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

Disability Support Services (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical, medical, or psychological disabilities.

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me in a timely manner with a letter from the Academic Support Center or Disability Support Services so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

STATEMENT ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods.

Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency.

Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies.

In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site (www.prepared.american.edu) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/ college-specific information.

CLASS OUTLINE AND READING LIST

WEEK 1 (JANUARY 11): INTRODUCTION, OVERVIEW

- Aggestam K., "Conflict Prevention: Old Wine in New Bottles?" *International Peacekeeping*, Volume 10, Number 1, spring 2003
- Gareth Evans, "Conflict Prevention: Ten Lessons We Have Learned," Closing Keynote Address to the University of Toronto Peace and Conflict Society Conference (Before the Crisis Breaks: Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and Preventive Diplomacy in the 21st Century), Toronto, 4 February 2007.
- Boutros-Ghali, "An Agenda for Peace: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping," Report of the Secretary-General (A/47/277 - S/24111), 17 June 1992

WEEK 2 (JANUARY 18): MLK DAY –NO CLASS

WEEK 3 (JANUARY 25): CONFLICT ASSESSMENT I: CONCEPTS & ISSUES

- Mark Hoffman, "Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment Methodology: Evolving art form or practical dead end?" Report of the Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2003.
- Andrew Sherriff, "All-of-Government Conflict Assessment and Civil Society Consultation: Critical Reflections from Bosnia-Herzegovina," *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, Vol. 5 NO. 1, 2009
- Joyce Hocker and William Wilmot "Conflict Assessment," in *Interpersonal Conflict*, 2nd ed. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Publishers, 1985.
- Susanne Buckley-Zistel, "Development Assistance and Conflict Assessment Methodology", *Conflict, Security & Development*, 3: 1, 119-127, 2003.
- International Crisis Group, "Guinea: Military Rule Must End Policy Briefing," *Africa Briefing* N°66, Dakar/Brussels, 16 October 2009.

WEEK 4 (FEBRUARY 1): CONFLICT ASSESSMENT II: SCHEMES & MODELS

- United States Agency for International Development, *Conducting a Conflict Assessment: A Framework for Strategy and Program Development*, USAID, 2004.
- United States Department of State, Office for the Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stabilization “Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework,” US Department of State, 2008.
- The World Bank Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Team, *Conflict Analysis Framework*, World Bank, 2005.
- United Kingdom Department of International Development, *Conducting Conflict Assessments: Guidance Notes*, DfID, 2002.
- *The Stability Assessment Framework: Designing Integrated Responses for Security, Governance and Development*, Netherlands: Clingendael Institute, Conflict Research Unit, 2005
- **CONFLICT ASSESSMENT PAPER DUE**

WEEK 5 (FEBRUARY 8): ISSUES IN CONFLICT PREVENTION

- Lawrence Wocher, “Preventing Violent Conflict: Assessing Progress, Meeting Challenges” *USIP Special Report 231*, September 2009.
- Carnegie Commission, *Executive Summary of the Final Report of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict*, May 1997.
- Tom Woodhouse, “Preventive medicine: can conflicts be prevented? *The evidence suggests that conflict prevention can work*, *BMJ*. 1999 August 14; 319(7207): 396–397
- Michael Lund, “Conflict Prevention: Theory in Pursuit of Policy and Practice” In J. Bercovitch et al (Eds), *The Sage Handbook of Conflict Resolution*, London: Sage Publications, 2009.
- The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *Transcript of Remarks by the President at the Acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize*, Oslo City Hall, December 10, 2009
- **GUEST SPEAKER: TBD**

WEEK 6 (FEBRUARY 15): EARLY WARNING AND PREVENTION

- Alexander George & Jane Holl, "The warning-response problem in preventive diplomacy." (Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict Carnegie Corporation of New York), May 1997.
- John Mark Opoku, *West African Conflict Early Warning and Conflict Response System: The Role of Civil Society Organizations*, Ghana: KAIPTC Occasional Paper, 2007.
- Jack Goldstone, *Using Quantitative and Qualitative Models to Forecast Instability*, USIP Special Report No.204, March 2008.
- Charles Parker and Eric K. Stern, "Blindsided? September 11 and the Origins of Strategic Surprise," *Political Psychology*, Vol. 23, No. 3
- "Ethiopia rejects hunger warning" Story from BBC NEWS:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/8436534.stm>

WEEK 7 (FEBRUARY 22): OPERATIONAL PREVENTION

- Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, Final Report: Part: 3: "Operational Prevention Strategies in the Face of Crisis-Looking at the Whole Problem," May 1997.
- H. Peter Langille, "Conflict Prevention: Options for Rapid Deployment and UN Standing Forces," in Oliver Ramsbotham and Tom Woodhouse, (eds.), *Warlords, Hawks and Doves: Peacekeeping as Conflict Resolution*, London: Frank Cass Publishing, 2000.
- Bruce Jentleson, "Preventive Diplomacy: A Conceptual and Analytic Framework" in *Opportunities Missed, Opportunities Seized: Preventive Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War World*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.
- Summary Note: United Nations General Assembly informal meeting on Operational Conflict Prevention 8 September 2006.
- Albrecht Schnabel, "Challenges of Operational Conflict Prevention: From Proactive to Reactive Prevention," paper presented at UNU Global Seminar.
- **EARLY WARNING DESIGNS DUE**

WEEK 8 (MARCH 1): STRUCTURAL PREVENTION

- Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, Final Report: Part: 4. "Structural Prevention: Strategies to Address the Root Causes of Deadly Conflict," May 1997.
- Philip Gounev, "Stabilizing Macedonia: conflict prevention, development and organized crime," *Journal of International Affairs*, September 22, 2003
- Sakiko Fukuda-Parr and Robert Picciotto, "Conflict Prevention and Development Cooperation," *International Affairs Working Paper 2007-08*, November 2007
- Peter Uvin, "The Development/ Peacebuilding Nexus: A typology and History of Changing Paradigms," *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, Vol. 1 No. 1, 2002

WEEK 9 (MARCH 8): SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10 (MARCH 15) CONFLICT PREVENTION - FAILURE IN RWANDA

- United Nations, "Memorial Conference on Rwanda Genocide," *UN Press Release AFR/868 HQ/630*.
- Samantha Power, "Bystanders to Genocide: Why the United States Let the Rwandan Tragedy Happen", *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 2001, p. 104.
- William Ferroggiaro, "The U.S. and the Genocide in Rwanda 1994: Information, Intelligence and the U.S. Response" Available online at: <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB117/>
- **FILM: GHOSTS OF RWANDA**

WEEK 11 (MARCH 22): CONFLICT PREVENTION - SUCCESS IN MACEDONIA

- International Crisis Group, "Macedonia: The Politics of Ethnicity and Conflict." 1997.
- Alice Ackermann, "Managing Conflicts Non-Violently Through Preventive Action: The Case of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia," *Journal of Conflict Studies* Vol. XIX No. 1, Spring 1999
- USIP: Macedonia: Prevention Can Work, *USIP Special Report*, March 27, 2000.

- Fraenkel, E. (1996) "International NGOs in Preventive Diplomacy and Early Warning: Macedonia." in Rotberg, R.I. *Vigilance and Vengeance: NGOs Preventing Ethnic Conflict in Divided Societies*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press. 113-131.
- Ali Dikici, "Introducing Multi-Ethnic Policing in Macedonia: The Role of the OSCE," *Review of International Law and Politics (RILP)*, Vol. 3, No. 10, 2007, pp. 129-146.
- **MISSED OPPORTUNITIES PAPERS DUE**

WEEK 12 (MARCH 29): THE UN AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

- Ralf Bredel, "The UN's Long-term Conflict Prevention Strategies and the Impact of Counter-terrorism," *International Peacekeeping*, 1743-906X, Volume 10, Issue 2, 2003.
- Danilo Turk, "The Role of the UN Security Council in Preventing Internal Conflicts," *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 8: 71-73, 2001
- UNSG, "Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization-June 2001 (A/55/985-S/2001/574)
- Tapio Kanninen, "Recent Initiatives by the Secretary-General and the UN System in Strengthening Conflict Prevention Activities," *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 8: 39-43, 2001.
- The Sunday Times article: "Is there blood on his hands?" October 1, 2006.

WEEK 13 (APRIL 5): ROLE OF NGOS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

- Thelma Ekiyor "The role of civil society in conflict prevention: West African experiences" United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), *Disarmament Forum: The complex dynamics of small arms in West Africa*, Number 4, pp. 27-34 pp. 27 - 34
- Africa Union Commission, "Civil Society Participation in Conflict Prevention in Africa: An Agenda for Action," *Issue paper No. 3*
- Rachel M. McCleary, "Guatemalan Indigenous NGOs and Their Capacity for Early Warning" in *Vigilance and Vengeance: NGOs Preventing Ethnic Conflict in Divided Societies*, by Robert I. Rotberg; Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1996
- Lennart Wohlgemuth, "NGOs and Conflict Prevention in Burundi: A Case Study," *Africa Development*, Vol. XXX, Nos. 1 & 2, 2005, pp. 183-209

- Neelan Tiruchelvam, “Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict and Preventive Action: The Role of NGOs,” in *Vigilance and Vengeance: NGOs Preventing Ethnic Conflict in Divided Societies*, by Robert I. Rotberg; Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1996

- **GUEST SPEAKER: TBD**

WEEK 14 (APRIL 12): ROLE OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS: OSCE

- Indra Øverland, “A Gap in OSCE Conflict Prevention? Local Media and Inter-Ethnic Conflict in the Former Soviet Union,” *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs Paper* No. 645.2003
- Ariel Bloed, “The OSCE and Policing as new tools for conflict Prevention.” *Helsinki Monitor* 2002, No. 4.
- Conflict Prevention in Central Asia: Role of OSCE (A Report on a Conference organized by the European Centre for Conflict Prevention and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague, March 7th and 8th, 2002)
- Safia Swimelar, “Approaches to Ethnic Conflict and Protection of Human Rights in Post-Communist Europe: The Need for Preventive Diplomacy,” *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Vol. 7 No. 3, Autumn 2001.

WEEK 15 (APRIL 19): GROUP PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 16 (APRIL 26): REFLECTIONS

- Stephen Stedman, “Alchemy for a New World Order: Overselling 'Preventive Diplomacy.’” *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 74 no.3
- Emma Stewart, “Conflict Prevention: Consensus or Confusion,” *Peace, Conflict and Development*, Vol. 3, June 2003
- Raimo Vayrynen, “Preventing Deadly Conflicts: Failures in Iraq and Yugoslavia” *Global Society*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 2000
- **FINAL EXAM PAPERS DUE: MAY 3**