

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

**CONFLICT ASSESSMENT AND PREVENTION
SIS 419.021/ SIS 619.021**

Spring 2011

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Time: Monday, 05:30PM-08:00PM
Venue: SIS 113
Office Hours:
Monday 03:00 PM-05:00 PM
Wednesday 02:00PM-06:00PM

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 (20%):**

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 20% 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 (due February 7):** the first paper will employ one of several assessment schemes studied in class to analyze one of the following:
 - Election dispute in Haiti
 - Nile River dispute
 - Cultural conflict in France
 - Religious conflict in Jos, Nigeria

- **Early warning system design (due February 28):** the second paper will propose an early warning system for detecting / predicting one of the following:
 - Urban violence in Rio de Janeiro during the Olympics (2016)
 - Major war in the Yellow Sea
 - Territorial conflict in post-referendum Sudan
 - Conflict escalation in Afghanistan after the US troop pullout

- **Missed opportunities paper (due March 28):** the third paper will identify and discuss missed opportunities to prevent one of the following:
 - The Sierra Leonean civil war (1991-2002)
 - Georgia-Russia war (2008)
 - US-Iraq war (2003)
 - The Kyrgyzstan crisis (2010)

- **Group project & presentation (20%)**
 Each student will join one of 4 groups to develop a Conflict Prevention Action Plan (in response to a USIP RFP) for addressing one of the following: urban violence in Rio de Janeiro during the Olympics (2016), the risk of major war in the Yellow Sea, territorial conflict in post-referendum Sudan, and conflict escalation in Afghanistan after the US troop pullout. Each group will present its draft proposal in class on April 25, 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 Paper (30%)**
 In lieu of a final exam, students will write a 20 page, fully annotated research paper exploring themes and concepts addressed in the class. Papers should do one of the following:
 - 1) Review the comparative merits of at least 3 conflict assessment models covered in class
 - 2) Produce a conflict and peace assessment report for a specific country or region
 - 3) Explore ideas for preventing conflict in a specific country or region
 - 4) Explore the link between early warning and prevention
 - 5) Evaluate a case of failed or successful prevention

Papers should focus on countries or groups of countries not covered in class. Students who wish to explore subjects other than those listed above should clear their topics first with the professor. The final paper will be worth up to 30% of the final grade. It shall be due by email on May 2, 2011.

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 10): INTRODUCTION, OVERVIEW

- Boutros-Ghali, B. "An Agenda for Peace: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping," Report of the Secretary-General (A/47/277 - S/24111), 17 June 1992.
- Aggestam K., "Conflict Prevention: Old Wine in New Bottles?" *International Peacekeeping*, Volume 10, Number 1, spring 2003.
- Pherson, Randolph. "Developing a More Effective Conflict Prevention Capacity in an Increasingly Unstable World December 18, 2000.
- "Ethiopia rejects hunger warning" Story from BBC NEWS:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/8436534.stm>

WEEK 2 (JANUARY 17): MLK DAY –NO CLASS

WEEK 3 (JANUARY 24): ISSUES IN CONFLICT ASSESSMENT

- Buckley-Zistel, Susanne. "Development Assistance and Conflict Assessment Methodology", *Conflict, Security & Development*, 3: 1, 119-127, 2003.
- Anderlini, Sanam. "Mainstreaming Gender in Conflict Analysis: Issues and Recommendation" *World Bank Social Development Papers-Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Paper No. 33/February 2006*
- Hocker, Joyce and William Wilmot. "Conflict Assessment," in *Interpersonal Conflict*, 2nd ed. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Publishers, 1985.
- International Foundation for Electoral Systems. "Background on the Lebanon Election Violence Risk Assessment Project," May 2010.

WEEK 4 (JANUARY 31): ASSESSMENT MODELS I (WORLD BANK, DFID, USAID, ICAF, ALL-OF-GOVERNMENT)

- 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.
- Sherriff, Andrew "All-of-Government Conflict Assessment and Civil Society Consultation: Critical Reflections from Bosnia-Herzegovina," *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, Vol. 5 NO. 1, 2009

WEEK 5 (FEBRUARY 7): ASSESSMENT MODELS II (PCIA, Conflict Sensitivity, MSTC, DO NO HARM, CAST)

- Hoffman, Mark. "Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment Methodology" Report of the Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, August 2004.
- GTZ-FRCS (Practitioner's Guide: Do No Harm)
- Barbolet, Adam et al "The utility and dilemmas of conflict sensitivity" Report of the Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2005

- Lowrey, William and Mathew Scott. "Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts: An International NGO's Longitudinal Experience with Participatory Action Research Approaches to Macro Context Analysis" *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Theory vs. Policy? Connecting Scholars and Practitioners, New Orleans Hilton Riverside Hotel, The Loews New Orleans Hotel, New Orleans, LA, Feb 17, 2010. Online <PDF>. 2010-11-15 from http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p414853_index.html*
- Baker, Pauline. "The Conflict Assessment System Tool: An Analytical Model for Early Warning and Risk Assessment of Weak and Failing States," Washington DC: Fund for Peace, 2006

❖ **CONFLICT ASSESSMENT REPORT DUE**

WEEK 6 (FEBRUARY 14): ISSUES IN CONFLICT PREVENTION

- Woocher, Lawrence. "Preventing Violent Conflict: Assessing Progress, Meeting Challenges" *USIP Special Report 231*, September 2009.
- Woodhouse, Tom. "Preventive medicine: can conflicts be prevented? The evidence suggests that conflict prevention can work," *BMJ*. 1999 August 14; 319(7207): 396–397
- Lund, Michael. "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.
- Stewart, Emma. "Conflict Prevention: Consensus or Confusion," *Peace, Conflict and Development*, Vol. 3, June 2003

WEEK 7 (FEBRUARY 21): EARLY WARNING AND PREVENTION

- George, Alexander, and 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.
- Goldstone, Jack. "Using Quantitative and Qualitative Models to Forecast Instability," *USIP Special Report No.204*, March 2008.
- Doom, Ruddy and Koen Vlassenroot, "Early warning and conflict prevention: Minerva's Wisdom", *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*
- Harff, Barbara, Ted Robert Gurr, "Systematic Early Warning of Humanitarian Emergencies," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 35, No. 5. (Sep., 1998), pp. 551-579.

WEEK 8 (FEBRUARY 28): STRUCTURAL AND 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.
- Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, Final Report: Part: 4. “Structural Prevention: Strategies to Address the Root Causes of Deadly Conflict,” May 1997.
- Summary Note: United Nations General Assembly informal meeting on Operational Conflict Prevention 8 September 2006.
- DfID. “Fighting poverty to build a safer world A strategy for security and development” March 2005

❖ EARLY WARNING DESIGN DUE

WEEK 9 (MARCH 7): SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10 (MARCH 14): THE UN AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

- Bredel, Ralf. “The UN's Long-term Conflict Prevention Strategies and the Impact of Counter-terrorism,” *International Peacekeeping*, 1743-906X, Volume 10, Issue 2, 2003.
- Turk, Danilo. “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)
- Kanninen, Tapio. “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.

WEEK 11 (MARCH 21): CASE STUDY: FAILURE IN RWANDA

- Meisler, Stanley. “The Stain of Rwanda” in *Kofi Annan: A Man of Peace in a World of War*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2007
- United Nations, “Memorial Conference on Rwanda Genocide,” *UN Press Release AFR/868 HQ/630*.

- Power, Samantha. "Bystanders to Genocide: Why the United States Let the Rwandan Tragedy Happen," *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 2001, p. 104.
- Ferroggiaro, William. "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/>

WEEK 12 (MARCH 28): CASE STUDY - SUCCESS IN MACEDONIA

- Ackermann, Alice. "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.
- Dikici, Ali. "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" PAPER DUE

WEEK 13 (APRIL 4): EMERGING NORMS: RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT

- UNGA: "Implementing the responsibility to protect" Report of the Secretary-General (A/63/677), January 2009
- Levitt, Jeremy I., "The Responsibility to Protect: A Beaver Without A Dam?", *Michigan Journal of International Law*, no. 25, 2003, pp. 153-177
- ICISS. "The Responsibility to Protect." Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, 2001.
- Pace, William R. and Nicole Deller. "Preventing Future Genocides: An International Responsibility to Protect," *World Order*, 2005, Vol. 36, No. 4.

WEEK 14 (APRIL 11): ROLE OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Cameron, Fraser. “The European Union and Conflict Prevention” United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. 2003.
- Spehar, Elizabeth. “The Role of the Organization of American States in Conflict Prevention,” *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*. 8:61-70 2001
- Ekiyor, Thelma. “ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework: A new approach to an old challenge,” *WACSI OpEd*, Vol./01/06/08
- Packer, John And Erik Friberg. Regional IGOS and Operational Conflict Prevention.” *Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict*

WEEK 15 (APRIL 18): ROLE OF NGOS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

- Ekiyor, Thelma. “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
- McCleary, Rachel M. “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
- Wohlgemuth, Lennart. “NGOs and Conflict Prevention in Burundi: A Case Study,” *Africa Development*, Vol. XXX, Nos. 1 & 2, 2005, pp. 183–209
- Tiruchelvam, Neelan. “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

WEEK 16 (APRIL 25): GROUP PRESENTATIONS

❖ **FINAL EXAM PAPERS DUE: MAY 2**