UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Conflict in the International System (GVPT 411)
Spring 2023
Monday/Wednesday 2:00-3:15
TYD 1132

Professor: David Cunningham (he/him)
Email: dacunnin@umd.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00-2:00, Tydings 3140L, and by appointment

Course Description

In this course, we will examine conflict, peace, and conflict resolution in contemporary international politics. We will interrogate what we mean by concepts such as peace, conflict, and violence, the different forms that these phenomena can take, and how we can measure their occurrence. We will discuss theoretical explanations for why individuals and groups have disputes, why these actors choose to use violence (or not) in these disputes, and ways in which violent disputes can be resolved peacefully. We will examine these arguments in a detailed study of contemporary conflicts, as well as by evaluating published articles that examine the effectiveness of conflict management strategies such as peacekeeping.

Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing this course you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of peace, conflict, violence, and conflict resolution
2. Evaluate different measurements of these concepts and describe the sources scholars of conflict and conflict resolution use to study these concepts.
3. Evaluate theoretical arguments for the causes of peace, conflict, and the resolution of conflict, analyzing major assertions, background assumptions, and explanatory issues
4. Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, on issues related to peace, violence, conflict, and conflict resolution

Required Resources

Course Website: elms.umd.edu

There is no textbook required for this course. All of the required readings will be posted on the class website at www.elmds.umd.edu. In addition, all of the writing assignments will be submitted through elms.

Course Guidelines

This is an in-person course. I will not take attendance, but it is highly recommended. However, if you are sick you should not come to class. Reach out to me if you miss class to make sure you are caught up on the material.

The best way to reach me is through email (dacunnin@umd.edu). You can also come to my office hours or make an appointment to meet, either in-person or virtually.

Grading

Grades are not given, but earned. Your grade is determined by your performance on the learning assessments in the course and is assigned individually (not curved). All assessment scores will be posted on the course ELMS page. If you would like to review any of your grades or have questions about how something was scored please come to my office hours or schedule a time to meet.

Grades will be assigned based on the following:

- Two midterm exams which roughly cover the first and second half of the course (40% total)
- Two article summaries in which students provide a summary of an article they will choose from a group of articles (20% total)
- An 8-10 page paper due during the final exam period (20%)
- An outline (5%) of the research paper which will be submitted in advance of completing the final paper.
- A reflection paper following a virtual visit from an outside speaker (5%)
- Class participation (10%). In the class, we will engage in both small and large group discussion. Students are encouraged to participate actively.

Final letter grades are assigned based on the percentage of total assessment points earned.

Final Grade Cutoffs									
+	97.00%	+	87.00%	+	77.00%	+	67.00%		
A	93.00%	B	83.00%	C	73.00%	D	63.00%	F	<60.0%
-	90.00%	-	80.00%	-	70.00%	-	60.00%		

Names/Pronouns and Self-Identifications:

The University of Maryland recognizes the importance of a diverse student body, and we are committed to fostering inclusive and equitable classroom environments. I invite you, if you wish, to tell us how you want to be referred to in this class, both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.). Keep in mind that the pronouns someone uses are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity. Visit trans.umd.edu to learn more.

Additionally, it is your choice whether to disclose how you identify in terms of your gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among all aspects of your identity (e.g., should it come up in classroom conversation about our experiences and perspectives) and should be self-identified, not presumed or imposed. I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly, and I ask you to do the same for all of your fellow Terps.

Communication with Peers:

With a diversity of perspectives and experience, we may find ourselves in disagreement and/or debate with one another. As such, it is important that we agree to conduct ourselves in a professional manner and that we work together to foster and preserve a virtual classroom environment in which we can respectfully discuss and deliberate controversial questions. I encourage you to confidently exercise your right to free speech—bearing in mind, of course, that you will be expected to craft and defend arguments that support your position. Keep in mind, that free speech has its limit and this course is NOT the space for hate speech, harassment, and

derogatory language. I will make every reasonable attempt to create an atmosphere in which each student feels comfortable voicing their argument without fear of being personally attacked, mocked, demeaned, or devalued.

Any behavior (including harassment, sexual harassment, and racially and/or culturally derogatory language) that threatens this atmosphere will not be tolerated. Please alert me immediately if you feel threatened, dismissed, or silenced at any point during our semester together and/or if your engagement in discussion has been in some way hindered by the learning environment.

Academic Integrity
For this course, some of your assignments will be collected via Turnitin on our course ELMS page. I have chosen to use this tool because it can help you improve your scholarly writing and help me verify the integrity of student work. For information about Turnitin, how it works, and the feedback reports you may have access to, visit Turnitin Originality Checker for Students

The University's Code of Academic Integrity is designed to ensure that the principles of academic honesty and integrity are upheld. In accordance with this code, the University of Maryland does not tolerate academic dishonesty. Please ensure that you fully understand this code and its implications because all acts of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of this code. All students are expected to adhere to this Code. It is your responsibility to read it and know what it says, so you can start your professional life on the right path. **As future professionals, your commitment to high ethical standards and honesty begins with your time at the University of Maryland.**

It is important to note that course assistance websites, such as CourseHero, or AI generated content (including ChatGPT) are not permitted sources, unless the instructor explicitly gives permission. Material taken or copied from these sites can be deemed unauthorized material and a violation of academic integrity. These sites offer information that might be inaccurate or biased and most importantly, relying on restricted sources will hamper your learning process, particularly the critical thinking steps necessary for college-level assignments.

Additionally, students may naturally choose to use online forums for course-wide discussions (e.g., Group lists or chats) to discuss concepts in the course. However, collaboration on graded assignments is strictly prohibited unless otherwise stated. Examples of prohibited collaboration include: asking classmates for answers on quizzes or exams, asking for access codes to clicker polls, etc. Please visit the **Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies** and reach out if you have questions.

Finally, on each exam or assignment you must write out and sign the following pledge: *"I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this exam/assignment."* If you ever feel pressured to comply with someone else's academic integrity violation, please reach out to me straight away. Also, *if you are ever unclear* about acceptable levels of collaboration, *please ask*!

Policies and Resources for Undergraduate Courses

It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by the University of Maryland's policies that relate to all courses, which include topics like:

- Academic integrity
- Student and instructor conduct
- Accessibility and accommodations
- Attendance and excused absences
- Grades and appeals
- Copyright and intellectual property

Please visit www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html for the Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies and follow up with me if you have questions.

Part I: Conflict in Contemporary Politics

Week 1: Introduction

January 25: Introduction

Week 2: Cases of Conflict

January 30: Russia-Ukraine

Reading:
- Masters, J. (2022). Ukraine: Conflict at the crossroads of Europe and Russia. *Council on Foreign Relations*, *1*.

February 1: Ethiopia

Reading:
- Verhoeven, H., & Woldemariam, M. (2022). Who lost Ethiopia? The unmaking of an African anchor state and US foreign policy. *Contemporary Security Policy*, *43*(4), 622-650.

Week 3: Peace, Conflict, and Violence

February 6: What is Peace? What is Violence?

Reading:
- Galtung, Johan. "Violence, peace, and peace research." *Journal of peace research* 6.3 (1969): 167-191.

February 8: Measuring Peace and Violence

Reading:
- LaFree, Gary, Laura Dugan and Erin Miller. *Putting Terrorism in Context: Lessons from the global terrorism database*. Routledge University Press (2015): 27-69.
- Pettersson, Therése, Stina Högbladh, and Magnus Öberg. "Organized violence, 1989–2018 and peace agreements." *Journal of Peace Research* 56.4 (2019): 589-603.

Part II: Causes of Conflict

Week 4: Motivation

February 13: Relative Deprivation

Reading:

- Gurr, Ted Robert. *Why men rebel*. Routledge, 2015. Selections

February 15: Group-level inequality

Reading:

- Cederman, Lars-Erik, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min. "Why do ethnic groups rebel? New data and analysis." *World Politics* 62.01 (2010): 87-119.

Week 5: Bargaining & War

February 20: The Bargaining Model

Reading:

- Fearon, James D. "Rationalist explanations for war." *International organization* 49.3 (1995): 379-414.

February 22: Applying the Bargaining Model

Reading:

- Lake, David A. "Two cheers for bargaining theory: Assessing rationalist explanations of the Iraq War." *International Security* 35.3 (2010): 7-52.

Week 6: Dissent & Repression

February 27: Protest & Violence

Reading:

- Stephan, Maria J., and Erica Chenoweth. "Why civil resistance works: The strategic logic of nonviolent conflict." *International Security* 33.1 (2008): 7-44.

March 1: The Repression-Dissent Nexus

Reading:

- Davenport, Christian. *State repression and the domestic democratic peace*. Cambridge University Press, 2007. Selections.

Week 7: External dimensions of conflict

March 6: Transnational Rebels

Reading:

- Salehyan, Idean. *Rebels without Borders: Transnational Insurgencies in World Politics.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1-60.

March 8: Military intervention & proxy war

Reading:

- Cunningham, David E. 2010. "Blocking Resolution: How External States can Prolong Civil Wars." *Journal of Peace Research* 47(2): 115-127.

Week 8: Cases of Conflict II

March 13: Civil war in the United States?

Reading:

- Walter, B. F. (2022). *How civil wars start: And how to stop them.* Crown Publishing Group (NY). Selections

March 15: Midterm 1

Part III: Managing, Resolving, and Preventing Conflict

Week 9: Negotiating Peace

March 27: Negotiations and Peace

Reading:

- Zartman, I. William. "The timing of peace initiatives: Hurting stalemates and ripe moments 1." *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics* 1.1 (2001): 8-18.
- Fisher, Roger, William L. Ury, and Bruce Patton. *Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in.* Penguin, 2011. Selections

March 29: Barriers to Implementing Peace

Reading:

- Walter, Barbara F. "The critical barrier to civil war settlement." *International organization* 51.03 (1997): 335-364.

Week 10: Mediation

April 3: Does mediation work?

Reading:
- Gartner, Scott Sigmund. "Deceptive results: Why mediation appears to fail but actually succeeds." *Penn St. JL & Int'l Aff.* 2 (2013): 27-37.
- Beardsley, Kyle. "Using the right tool for the job: Mediator leverage and conflict resolution." *Penn St. JL & Int'l Aff.* 2 (2013): 57-65.

April 5: Which mediators?

Reading:
- Reid, L. (2017). Finding a peace that lasts: Mediator leverage and the durable resolution of civil wars. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *61*(7), 1401-1431.

Week 11: Peacekeeping I

April 10: No class

Article Summary #1 due Tuesday, April 10

April 12: Introduction to Peacekeeping

Reading:
- Fortna, Virginia Page. "Does peacekeeping keep peace? International intervention and the duration of peace after civil war." *International studies quarterly* 48.2 (2004): 269-292.

Week 12: Peacekeeping II

April 17: Peacekeeping and Civilian Protection

Reading:
- Hultman, Lisa, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon. "United Nations peacekeeping and civilian protection in civil war." *American Journal of Political Science* 57.4 (2013): 875-891.

April 19: Empirical Research on Peacekeeping

Article Summary #2 due Friday, April 20

Week 13: Justice and Peace

April 24: Post-conflict justice

Reading:
- Loyle, Cyanne E., and Benjamin J. Appel. 2017. "Conflict Recurrence and Postconflict Justice: Addressing Motivations and Opportunities for Sustainable Peace." *International Studies Quarterly* 61(3): 690-703.

April 26: International Criminal Court

Reading:
- Jo, Hyeran, and Beth A. Simmons. 2016. "Can the International Criminal Court Deter Atrocity?" *International Organization* 70(3): 443-475.

Week 14: Conflict Prevention

May 1: Preventing violent conflict?

Reading:
- Call, C. T., & Campbell, S. P. (2018). Is prevention the answer?. *Dædalus*, *147*(1), 64-77.

May 3: Midterm Exam #2

Week 15: Conclusion & Paper Workshop

May 8: Course conclusion

Paper outline due Wednesday, May 9th

May 10: Paper workshop

Final paper due Wednesday, May 17, 3:30

Resources & Accommodations

Accessibility and Disability Services
The University of Maryland is committed to creating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive educational, working, and living environment for people of all abilities. The University of Maryland is also committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the University, or be subjected to discrimination. The **Accessibility & Disability Service (ADS)** provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals to provide equal access to services, programs and activities. ADS cannot assist retroactively, so it is generally best to request accommodations several weeks before the semester begins or as soon as a disability becomes known. Any student who needs accommodations should contact me as soon as possible so that I have sufficient time to make arrangements.

For assistance in obtaining an accommodation, contact Accessibility and Disability Service at 301-314-7682, or email them at **adsfrontdesk@umd.edu**. Information about **sharing your accommodations with instructors, note taking assistance** and more is available from the **Counseling Center**.

Student Resources and Services
Taking personal responsibility for your own learning means acknowledging when your performance does not match your goals and doing something about it. I hope you will come talk to me so that I can help you find the right approach to success in this course, and I encourage you to visit **UMD's Student Academic Support Services website** to learn more about the wide range of campus resources available to you.

In particular, everyone can use some help sharpening their communication skills (and improving their grade) by visiting **UMD's Writing Center** and schedule an appointment with the campus Writing Center.

There are a wide range of resources to support you with whatever you might need (**UMD's Student Resources and Services website** may help). If you feel it would be helpful to have someone to talk to, visit **UMD's Counseling Center** or **one of the many other mental health resources on campus**.

Basic Needs Security
If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or lack a safe and stable place to live, please visit **UMD's Division of Student Affairs website** for information about resources the campus offers you and let me know if I can help in any way.

Veteran Resources
UMD provides additional supports to student veterans. You can access those resources at the office of Veteran Student life and the Counseling Center. Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to the instructor.

Course Evaluation
Please submit a course evaluation through Student Feedback on Course Experiences to help faculty and administrators improve teaching and learning at Maryland. All information submitted is confidential. Campus will notify you when Student Feedback on Course Experiences is open for you to complete your evaluations at the end of the semester. Please go directly to the **Student Feedback on Course Experiences** to complete your evaluations. By completing all your evaluations each semester, you will be able to access through Testudo evaluation reports for thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted evaluations.

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