MA Module:  
Conflict and Conflict Resolution  
(PIM03)  

Professor Dominik Zaum  
e-mail: d.zaum@rdg.ac.uk  

2013/14  
Mondays, 1-3pm, HUMSS 406
DESCRIPTION OF THE MODULE

Conflict has always been present in international affairs. Since the end of the Cold War, however, the sources and patterns of conflict have become more complex, and civil wars – often with the involvement of external actors – have become the most prevalent form of conflict. In addition, the international community has developed new instruments and approaches to resolve conflicts and mitigate their consequences. In this course, we will explore the sources and nature of conflict, both civil and international, and discuss how the nature of conflict has changed since the end of the cold war. We will examine the different approaches chosen by the international community to prevent, manage, and resolve conflicts, assessing both military and non-military instruments, and discuss the factors that promote and hinder effective conflict management.

Teaching and Learning methods:

The class is taught in seminars. The seminars consist of student presentations as well as group discussion.

Students are expected to develop their knowledge of the subject through a high level of independent study combined with group work, which will inform the class discussions. Presentations, essays and exams are designed not only to test students’ knowledge and ability to think critically and analytically in a variety of environments, but also to reinforce independent study and to ensure a careful and judicious consideration of it. Presentations are also designed to enhance transferable skills. They should aim to communicate concise, critical analyses effectively and raise topics for the subsequent discussion. Students are encouraged to explore different presentation techniques and present freely from brief notes.

Contact Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Autumn</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorials/seminars</td>
<td>8 x 2hrs</td>
<td>7 x 2hrs</td>
<td>1 x 2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total hours</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of essays or assignments</td>
<td>One summative essay</td>
<td>One summative essay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (eg major seminar paper)</td>
<td>At least one Seminar Presentation</td>
<td>At least one Seminar Presentation</td>
<td>Revision class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coursework

Presentations
Individual presentations must not be longer than 15 minutes and should be accompanied by a one-page summary of the main points, as well as a short bibliography. Topics will be assigned in the business meeting.

Essays
Two Summative essays (one for Term 1, one for Term 2, the combined total of which equals 7,000 words) are due to be submitted electronically on Blackboard on Friday of the final week of full term, and submitted in hard copy as well, to my pigeon hole in Melanie Richardson’s office. Essay topics will be announced early in each term.

Assessment:

Coursework
The two summative essays each contribute 25% of grade for the module.
Relative percentage of coursework: 50%

Penalties for late submission:
Deduction of 10 marks for essays delayed by up to one week; thereafter a mark of 0 will be awarded. Marks will also be deducted for overlong essays. For further rules applying to essays, students are requested to refer to the GIPIS Handbook.

Examination:
One three-hour examination. Students will have to write three essays chosen from 10 questions. Each essay is worth 1/3 of the examination grade. The examination grade is worth 50% of the final grade.

Requirements for a pass:
Students must achieve an overall mark 50% after coursework and exam marks have been combined. A grade of 50% will reflect the following characteristics in

Reassessment arrangements
Re-sit examinations in September or following May; re-submission of coursework by September or May; resubmission of dissertation by May of following year.
Topics

**Autumn Term: Perspectives on War and Violence**

Week 1 (7 Oct): Conflict and Conflict Resolution: Introductory Lecture and Discussion
Week 2 (14 Oct): Business Meeting
Week 3 (21 Oct): The Changing Character of Conflict
Week 4 (28 Oct): Measuring Conflict and Violence
Week 5: (4 Nov.): Greed and/or Grievance? On the Causes of Civil War
Week 6 (11 Nov.) War Economies
Week 7 (18 Nov.): READING WEEK
Week 8 (25 Nov): Civilians at War
Week 9 (2 Dec.): Gender, Conflict, and Violence

**Spring Term: Addressing Violent Conflict**

Week 1 (13 Jan.): Peacekeeping
Week 2 (20 Jan.): Brokering Peace Agreements
Week 3 (27 Jan.): The Role of Political Settlements
Week 4 (3 Feb.): Building States to Build Peace?
Week 5 (10 Feb.): READING WEEK
Week 6 (17 Feb.): Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration
Week 7 (23 Feb.): Community-driven reconstruction and development
Week 8: (3 March): Regulating Conflict Commodities
Background and Introductory Readings

There is no textbook for this programme. However, the following books provide a useful overview over many of the issues addressed in the module.


SEMINARS

Autumn Term: Perspectives on War and Violence

Week 1: Introductory Lecture and Discussion

Read Christopher Blattman and Edward Miguel, “Civil war”, *Journal of Economic Literature*, Vol.48/1 (2010), 3-57. We will discuss this article following the business meeting in week 2.

Week 2: Business Meeting

During this meeting, we will discuss in more detail the module topics, assign presentations, and discuss the expected workload. We will also discuss essays, submission deadlines etc.
Week 3: The Changing Nature of Conflict

- Why has conflict and violence overall declined since the end of the cold war, and why is violent conflict concentrated in the developing world?
- Is the concept of “new wars” offer a useful analytical distinction?


Further Reading:


Cramer, Christopher: Civil War is Not a Stupid Thing: Accounting for Violence in the Developing World (London: Hurst, 2006), esp. ch.2.


Week 4: Measuring Conflict and Violence

Details on the preparatory work will be handed out in the previous session.

Reading:
Cramer, Christopher, Civil War is Not a Stupid Thing: Accounting for Violence in the Developing World (London: Hurst, 2006), ch.2.

Further Reading:

Datasets (all accessible online):
State Performance Indices:
- Failed States Index (Fund for Peace)
- Bertelsmann Transformation Index
- World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment
Conflict and Violence Data:
- Uppsala Conflict Database
• Correlates of War programme
• Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development (The Global Burden of Armed Violence)
• Global Terrorism Database

**Week 5: Greed and/or Grievance? On the Causes of Civil War**

*How important are inequalities for explaining conflict?*

*Is “state failure” an analytically useful concept for explaining war and violence?*

*Does natural resource wealth cause conflict?*

**Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


**Week 6: War Economies**

*Why are war economies so persistent, even after conflict has formally ended?*

*Is war “Development in Reverse”?*

*Can war economies explain the durability of civil wars?*

Reading:

Cramer, Christopher, Civil War is Not a Stupid Thing: Accounting for Violence in the Developing World (London: Hurst, 2006).


Further Reading:


Berdal, Mats, and Achim Wennmann (eds.): Ending Wars, Consolidating Peace: Economic Perspectives (ISS/Routledge 2010), especially chapters 5, 6, 9, and 10.


**Week 7: READING WEEK**

**Week 8: Civilians at War**

Are civilians merely victims in conflict?

What explains the variation in the way in which rebel groups treat civilians?

Reading:


Further Reading:


**Week 9: Gender, Conflict, and Violence**

Are women affected by conflict in different ways than men? Why?

Why is sexual violence so prevalent in civil wars?

Does greater gender equality reduce the risk of conflict and violence? If so, why?

**Reading**


**Further Reading**


Spring Term: Addressing Violent Conflict

Week 1: Peacekeeping

Does the evolution in peacekeeping reflect the changing character of conflict, or the changed international environment?

Does peacekeeping help to end civil wars? Does it help to build peace?

Reading


Further Reading


### Week 2: Brokering and Implementing Peace Agreements

*Why have most conflicts since the end of the cold war ended in negotiated settlements? Are the key obstacles to the implementation of peace agreements political or economic? “Peace agreements can end conflicts, but not necessarily violence.” Discuss*

Readings:


Fortna, Page: ‘Where have all the Victories gone?’, (ISA paper, 2004)


Further Reading


John Stedman, Donald Rothchild, and Elizabeth Cousens (eds.): *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002).


Week 3: The Role of Political Settlements

What distinguishes political settlements from peace settlements, and from institutions?

How are political settlements maintained?

How do political settlements change?

Reading:


Further Reading:


**Week 4: Building States to Build Peace?**

*How does statebuilding support peacebuilding efforts?*

*Can statebuilding fuel violence?*

*How robust and analytically useful are the key insights from the “liberal peace” debate?*

Reading:


Further Reading:


Call, Charles, and Vanessa Wyeth (eds.): *Building States to Build Peace* Lynne Rienner 2008).


Cousens, Elizabeth, Cheetar Kumar, and Karin Wermester: *Peacebuilding as Politics: Cultivating Peace in Fragile Societies* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2001), esp. introduction.


**Week 5: READING WEEK**
**Week 6: Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration**

*What have been the main obstacles to successful DDR measures? Is “reintegration” best understood from an economic or a political perspective?*

Readings:


Further Reading:


Berdal, Mats and David Ucko, Reintegrating Armed Groups after Conflict (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009)


Week 7: Community-driven reconstruction and development

Can Community Driven Reconstruction and Development contribute to Statebuilding?

“CDD projects risk elite capture and future conflict.” Discuss.

Reading


Further Reading


Wong, Susan, What have been the Impacts of World Bank Community Driven Development Programs? (Washington D.C.: World Bank, 2012)

Week 8: Regulating Conflict Commodities

What are the main challenges to regulating the trade in conflict commodities?

How successful have commodity- and country-specific regimes to regulate conflict commodities been?

Reading


Le Billon, Philippe, Fuelling War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts (London: IISS, 2001), chapter 3.


Further Reading:


DZ, 27 September 2013