

HDDR 6364 - International Conflict Management

March 2014

Instructor: Daniel Rainey

Web Site: <http://danielrainey.us>

E-Mail: lrainey@smu.edu or daniel@danielrainey.us

Course Introduction and Syllabus

COURSE WORKSPACE

I will set up an online workspace for this course, on which I will post readings, course material, and other information generated during our sessions. Only class members and invited guests will have access to the workspace.

PLEASE NOTE: The only way I have to contact class members is through the SMU e-mail address provided to me by the Department – PLEASE CHECK YOUR SMU E-MAIL REGULARLY FOR UPDATES TO THIS SYLLABUS AND FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE CLASS.

ORIENTATION & CAVEAT

I have designed this course not as a traditional survey of dispute resolution theory or the theory and practice of diplomacy. Rather, I want us to approach international conflict management/dispute resolution (CM/DR) from a “project” orientation, with the goal of using a very broad range of conflict management/dispute resolution efforts to illustrate the full spectrum across which CM/DR can be pursued.

We will attempt to accomplish this by interacting with a series of guests, all of whom are actively working in arenas that I would describe as part of the international CM/DR world, and by producing a proposal for an intervention.

Many of us who work in dispute resolution have come to eschew the term “neutral” as a way to describe individuals who work as traditional third parties, or who do more non-traditional work in CM/DR. We are all human beings who cannot leave our experiences and values at the door, no matter how much we try to be dispassionate and disinterested as we work with parties and participants. The guests who have agreed to join us in this course are all working in positions that require them to assume, in some form, a third party stance between two or more identifiable parties in conflicts ranging from classic commercial arbitration to transformative peace building. To their work they bring their life experiences and observations, and even though our discussions will center on process and approach, it is likely that comments with a clear point of view will be made about the work in which they are engaged. You may not agree with some of their observations, but please remember that our focus is on the strategic and operational decisions they have made as they work in their respective areas and what we can learn from their experiences.

Our discussions will focus on some basic questions, such as, but certainly not limited to, questions like the following:

- Where are you working? (What is the conflict environment and who are the interested parties?)
- What choices have you made about how to approach the situation?
- Why did you make those choices?
- Have you made any course corrections or changed tack based on your experience?

Required Reading

There are two required books for this course:

Edward Said, Orientalism (NOTE: This book may be free online, and regardless, I will post the required reading excerpts from the book in the class workspace.)

Bernard Mayer, Staying With Conflict. John Wiley and Sons, San Francisco, 2009.
ISBN: 978-0-7879-9729-8

There are three articles required as reading for this course:

Nadja Alexander, "Mediation Metamodel"

Notter and Diamond, "Building Peace and Transforming Conflict"

McDonald, "Guidelines for Newcomers to Track Two Diplomacy"

[These three articles will be posted in the class worksite.]

Please do your best to read all of these required texts and articles before we meet for the first class.

Learning Objectives

There are many legitimate ways to approach discussions about international conflict resolution and conflict management. It is perhaps most common for discussions about international conflict resolution to focus on identifiable crises or conflicts, with definable interested parties and identifiable third parties. Standard diplomacy, second and third track diplomacy, crisis intervention, and other high visibility conflict contexts certainly are a fertile ground for learning, but they are not the only contexts in which dispute resolution is practiced internationally.

This course will, to some degree, focus on traditional conceptions of international conflict resolution, but the course will also look at some dispute resolution efforts that do not center around definable micro-conflicts, and in which the third parties are not engaged in work that could be easily described as mediation or traditional dispute resolution.

To focus our discussions, we will use a series of “live” examples to demonstrate the breadth and variety of conflict resolution and conflict management efforts currently underway around the world. In each case the class will have a chance to interact directly with dispute resolution professionals who are applying dispute resolution theory in contexts as remotely connected as transformative peace-building and commercial arbitration.

Key Learning Objectives	How Achieved
1. Students will learn to appreciate and understand the breadth of international work that can be considered conflict management.	<p>Related articles will be provided so students can identify the theories associated with and the skills necessary for engaging in international conflict management.</p> <p>Direct discussion with international conflict management professionals will provide perspectives on the application of the theories.</p>
2. Students will learn the intricacies and nuances of applying conflict resolution theory to complex, on-the-ground situations.	Students will form teams to analyze selected international conflict management efforts, and each student will prepare a proposal for conflict management efforts in a conflict zone of her or his choosing.

Grades

In-Class Participation: Class members are expected to attend all six face-to-face meetings of the class, to arrive on time, prepared, and to participate fully in discussions, presentations, etc. **(Maximum = 20 points)**

Readings Discussion: Each individual will be expected to participate in a full-class discussion on the content of the readings. **(Maximum = 10 points)**

Proposal Pitch: The work teams will prepare and present a short (maximum 30 minutes) proposal pitch on the Sunday of the first weekend of class, outlining the venue in which they have chosen to work, and the assessment checklist for that venue (using a checklist supplied by the instructor). **(Maximum = 15 points)**

Proposal Presentation: The work teams will present their full intervention proposal to the class on the Saturday or Sunday of the second weekend of class.
(Maximum = 15 points)

Written Proposal: The work teams will submit their written proposals, using guidelines determined by a funding organization, no later than two weeks after the last class meeting. (Maximum = 25 points)

Journal: Each individual will be expected to maintain a personal journal throughout the class, with observations about class discussions and readings, teamwork, and the application of the information developed in the class to careers in dispute resolution. (Maximum = 15 points)

Specific requirements for the Journal are:

- A reflection on your “favorite quote” from both of the required texts (Orientalism and Staying With Conflict) – why is it your favorite quote and what does it tell you about international dispute resolution?
- A reflection on what you will take from the course that may affect your practice as a dispute resolution professional.
- An evaluation of your team’s performance, including an overall assessment of your final product, the teamwork process, and your own contributions.
- Any other observations about the class, your learning, your team members, etc.

The following scale, based on the department standard, will be used to calculate final grades:

94-100 = A

90-93 = A-

87-89 = B+

84-86 = B

80-83 = B-

77-79 = C+

74-76 = C

70-73 = C-

NOTE:

The information below is required content for all SMU syllabi – the language is taken from standard university guidelines.

Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Ms. Rebecca Marin, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities (214-768-4557) to verify the disability and establish eligibility for accommodations. They should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements. (See University Policy No. 2.4.)

Religious Observance: Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on the holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

Honor Code: Students are reminded of the SMU Honor Code as referenced in the *Student Handbook*. Intellectual integrity and academic honesty are both the foundation and the goals for this program. Please reference and review the university policies on the responsibilities, policies, and penalties regarding academic honesty at the URL below:

http://www.smu.edu/studentlife/PCL_05_HC.asp

Class Decorum: Turn off (or set on vibrate) all cell phones or pagers. Do not read newspapers, books for other classes, or other outside reading material during class. Walking into class late is disruptive as is leaving early. If you have to leave early, make arrangements before class begins, and then, when you leave, do so quietly. Professional respect and courtesy for your fellow students is imperative at all times.