COURSE FOCUS

In this course, we will examine the causes, sources, and origins of group violence with particular attention to group violence and ethnic conflict. We will explore the perspectives and theories that explain why violence becomes a primary, or at least a viable, form of resolving conflict and/or organizing human relations. In the second half of the course, we will devote ourselves to examining the relationship between violence and conditions for peace.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Explain and analyze violence. More specifically, you will be able to explain why some societies resort to violence as a means for resolving conflicts. *This will be evaluated specifically through the Conflict Mapping Project and the mid-term and final exams.*

2. Understand and utilize the central concepts, theories and debates that structure the field of violence and especially group violence. *This will be evaluated specifically through the weekly journals and the mid-term and final exams.*

3. Discuss insights about human behavior and groups by 1) examining violence and 2) conditions for peace. *This will be evaluated specifically through the weekly journals and the small group and large group discussions.*

4. Communicate and collaborate productively with peers. Communication & Collaboration are integral to academic learning and working in the real world. We
will develop and practice these skills very often in this class through group work and dialogue. *This will be evaluated specifically through the small group and large group discussions and the Conflict Mapping Project.*

*Please note: Some of this class may be asynchronous and or in an online/offline environment. The schedule to include the format (in class, online or a mix) may also change from time to time based on the health situation in Korea (spread of the virus). Ensure you check with the professor in order to get the most updated information please.*

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

I will share all readings with you via Mason Blackboard.

**What can we expect from each other?**

**What you can expect from me, the instructor:**
Every time I enter discussion, I will come prepared, which means that I will have read the assigned materials for the day and thought carefully about what we are trying to accomplish that day. I will be fully present during class and will treat each of you with respect and integrity. I am also available outside of our Zoom meetings and more than willing to discuss your concerns and any aspects of this course.

**What I can expect from each student:**
Because you have chosen to enroll in this course, you agree to have the same expectations as the instructor. In other words, you agree to come to each class (via Zoom) having read all assigned materials and thoughtfully prepared for class. You also agree to be fully present during class and to treat fellow students and the instructor with respect and integrity. Finally, as students in this course, you agree to thoughtfully engage in discussions and conversations in every class and make every effort to empathize with and respect the perspectives of others.

**What we can expect to happen in class:**
Every time we meet via Zoom, this class is an opportunity for us to become a learning community. This means that each student is required to be an active participant in this class—asking questions, contributing to discussion by sharing their perspectives, and critically thinking about the issues we address in this class. Half-baked ideas and thoughts are welcome; often times, just trying to say what you’re thinking allows you to further develop your ideas and arguments.
What we can expect in regards to electronic devices:
As part of cultivating a space for discussion, please use your laptop only for the purpose of participating in our Zoom meeting. Obviously, I can’t check if you’re doing anything else on your laptop. But please note, the appearance of being distracted during our Zoom meeting will be enough to negatively affect your participation grade and attendance.

Overview of Course Grade

Your learning will be evaluated in the following ways:

15% Class Participation (Attendance, Large Group Discussion, in-class activities)
15% Class Participation (Small Group Discussion)
15% Journals
20% Conflict Mapping Project & Presentation
15% Mid-Term Exam
20% Cumulative Final Exam

1. Attendance & Class Participation
This course depends upon your attendance. Two or more absences of our Zoom meetings during the semester will lower the student’s final grade by two thirds of a letter grade (e.g. a B+ will become a B-), and more than four absences will result in a failing grade. If a student joins the meeting after attendance is taken or leaves the meeting early, the student may be counted absent (unless student contacts the professor prior to class to make arrangements).

You will be granted an excused absence from class only in specific, unavoidable situations such as death in the family or health emergency.

In order to get a full participation grade, actively ask questions, share your perspectives, and engage in critical thinking about the material during Large Group Discussions and Small Group Discussions. Equally important, participate enthusiastically in class activities and writing assignments.

"When everyone in the classroom, teacher and students, recognizes that they are responsible for creating a learning community together, learning is at its most meaningful and useful."
-bell hooks
Note: If a student engages in actions which distract others and detract from the classroom’s overall experience as a learning community, then his/her participation grade will be significantly reduced.

2. Small Group Discussions
We are a learning community and the success of this class depends on our active engagement with the class materials and with one another. Through the process of dialogue and discussion, we will gain a deeper and richer understanding of the issues discussed in this course. Difference in opinions, feelings and values are welcome and respected in this classroom.

I will remind you via email the reading schedule for the upcoming week every Friday. You should come prepared to discuss what you have read for every class. A specific type of discussion that we will have in each Zoom session is: Small Group Discussion (please see “Reading Roles & Journal Guidelines” which I will make available on our first day of class).

I will ask everyone to evaluate their fellow group members several times during the semester regarding their participation and contributions to group discussions and project. However, if you have a problem with a group member who is not keeping up with the reading or not participating please notify me early in the semester so that I may discuss the issue with that individual.

3. Journals
Good writers are most often interested readers. For this class, please write a reflective journal responding to the day’s readings prior to class. See the “Reading Roles & Journal Guidelines” handout for the requirements for journals. Students should post their journal entry on Blackboard by 10am the day of class. Late journals will not be accepted. Please have your journals with you for breakout rooms.

4. Conflict Mapping Project & Presentation
Students will form groups for this project. Your group of 2 to 3 will focus on a conflict that is currently ongoing. Throughout the semester, you will examine the conflict’s historical and cultural background, study the conflict actors involved at the macro and micro levels, and provide the class with weekly updates about the conflict. The final product of the project is a presentation to the U.S. Department of State. Your presentation should include a cogent analysis of the conflict, its causes and developments, the cultural and historical debates related to the conflict, and both immediate and long-term policy recommendations. I will provide you with more instructions in the second week of the semester.

5. Mid-Term and Final Exam
The final exam in this course is cumulative.

Grading Scale
As instructor, I reserve the right to round up or down any course grade calculations at the end of the semester.

A  94-100  B-  80-83  D+  67-69
A-  90-93  C+  77-79  D  64-66
B+  87-89  C  74-76  D-  60-63
B  84-86  C-  70-73  F  0-59

Students should keep in mind that “A” level work should be outstanding and consistently exceed minimum requirements.

**Answers to Other Important Questions**

**Turning in Late Work**
All course work should be submitted by the assignment deadlines. There is no exception for group projects and presentations. Regarding individual papers, if you know that you will be unable to complete an assignment by the due date, you should make this clear to me by e-mail at least 24 hours before the deadline. A short extension without penalty is possible only if you notify me 24 hours in advance.

If not, assignments submitted *after* the deadline will be docked 1/3 of a letter grade for each day late: a B+ becomes a B, a B becomes a B-, and so on.

**Academic Integrity**
All of the work that you submit for this course must be your own. The university has a strict policy concerning academic integrity. The George Mason University Honor Code reads as follows: “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this Honor Code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found on the Committee of Academic Integrity’s website at [https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/resources-and-services/cai/overview](https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/resources-and-services/cai/overview).

Academic integrity is an essential part of personal integrity, and I expect you to demonstrate honorable behavior in all of your classes including mine. You should pledge to observe Mason’s Honor Code in all written and oral work including journals, papers, presentations and exams. Student who committed plagiarism in an assignment will at a minimum receive a failing grade for the assignment. As the instructor for this course, I will also report the student and instance of plagiarism to the Dean.

**Ethical Discourse and Inclusivity**
George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

I share that commitment and strive to maintain a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. In this class we will not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, economic class, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

Please see http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/ for the full GMU diversity statement.

Carter School Anti-Racism and Equality Statement
As a member of the George Mason University community, the Carter School seeks to create an educational environment that is committed to equality, fairness and inclusiveness (anti-racism and inclusive excellence). All conflict resolution courses operate with the fundamental understanding that work like this starts with each individual, but must also be institutional in nature; together, students and faculty will work together to interrupt cycles of inequality, biases, racism and all forms of violence, building knowledge and taking actions that cultivate a more equitable, inclusive, and just learning environment for all participants, regardless of background. In all our efforts, we uphold a commitment to creating honest, respectful, supportive, and healing spaces where members of our community can meaningfully dialogue and learn together and from each other for the betterment of our entire community and the global society. Learn more about the Carter School’s commitment to fairness, equality and anti-racism: https://carterschool.gmu.edu/about/carter-school-anti-racism-statement.

Disability Accommodations
If you are a student with a physical, learning, and/or psychological disability, I will gladly work with you to arrange academic accommodations for this class.

Please note that reducing assignments or reducing the class attendance requirement are not permitted as accommodations for a disability at the college level.

Carter School COVID-19 policy on student accommodations
I am aware that that COVID-19 may poise unusual challenges for you through the semester. If your ability to participate fully in this course is impacted by changes in your or your family’s health, please be in contact with me and your academic advisor to explore options. On a case by case basis, we will determine the appropriate strategy to support your academic success. Strategies may include substitution of independent work for in-course participation, extension of assignment deadlines, or the award of an incomplete grade for the semester.
Meeting with the Professor about Your Grades
I won’t discuss grades over email. This is to protect your privacy, so please do not make such requests. Instead, set up a Zoom meeting with me.

Essay Formatting
I expect you to show that you take pride in every piece of written work that you submit. Always re-read your journals and essays (even if they are in draft form) for grammatical errors and spelling mistakes. You should also read your essay aloud to yourself or to a friend. In addition, please adhere to the following guidelines:

• Essays must be in 12-point Times New Roman or similar font with 1.0 in/2.54 cm spacing around the margins.

• Essays must have page numbers and a header that includes your name, the assignment name, and date.

• All of the formal assignments must be submitted via paper copy.

Rules for Citation
You can use this useful online resource for rules on citation. The American Sociological Association Style Guide:

for in-text citation: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/asa_style/in_text_citation_references.html

for references: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/asa_style/references_page_formatting.html

Mandatory Reporting
As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per George Mason University Policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, for GMU Fairfax’s main campus, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (703-993-2380). You may also seek local counseling assistance from the IGC counseling center by calling 032-626-6142 or emailing wellness@gmu.edu. Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing cde@gmu.edu. For GMUK Psychological Services, you may call 032 626-6142 or visit the multi- complex building, room 3052. For GMUK’s Title IX Coordinator, you may contact Professor Zimmerman by calling 032-626-5110 or emailing dzimmer2@gmu.edu.