

School of Government

STRA 507
CONFLICT RESOLUTION / PEACEKEEPING
(15 Points)

Trimester One 2007

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

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Course Dates, Times and Locations

Dates: Monday 2 to Thursday 5 April 2007 (inclusive)

Times: 9.00am to 5.00pm

Locations: The course will be held on the Pipitea Campus of Victoria University and you will be advised of your classroom location one week prior to the course by email.

Course Outline, Goals and Learning Objectives

Course teaching/learning objectives always rely on a combination of activities between actors. As instructor, my broad goal is to set *clear* objectives, use *appropriate* teaching methods that help ‘learning’, and then have *relevant* assessment methods. Because the connection between teaching and learning is quite complex, what follows is my attempt to be clear on how all that might be achieved.

Starting with activity, my intention is to introduce, explain and explore key concepts and examples relevant to the ‘conflict field’. Improving the prospects that this will work well as a learning exercise requires engagement from the candidates, particularly:

- some advanced reading,
- interactive discussion of key concepts and of the readings in class,
- reflecting on the classes and reading, including making notes and summaries,
- focused personal study preparation, and
- completion of the assessment/s.

Assessment details are set out below. Here I add some detail to the last two bullet points above. The idea is that candidates should spend the time relevant to this course *after the lectures*, reflecting on the subjects covered in the class period and readings, and preparing for the formal assessment. In particular, the goal is that candidates will focus their study around 15 ‘thought pegs’ that will be given out during classes. Candidates should do research and prepare their own summaries and draft essays for each. Those ‘thought pegs’ capture the essence of the learning goals of this course and 12 of the 15 form the basis of the questions set in the assessment test and examinations.

As indicated, those matters are dealt with further below. To return to the flow of teaching and topics, the course progresses from initially surveying key concepts in the field of conflict and its attempted resolution, to considering the theory and practice of peacekeeping in contemporary international situations and then to preparing for the assessment. We use the reading materials to discuss the wide range of subjects covered – hence the progression of content will follow the subject headings in the readings, and the value if candidates have some familiarity with the readings (but detailed advance study is not required or expected). The flow of discussion will dictate pace, but the idea is to follow the outline of subjects to be covered in each session – that is set out separately.

As regards *teaching methods*, the goal in the 4 days of class contact is thus for it to be *interactive* i.e. a constant engagement of ideas and discussion, rather than one-way traffic. At Masters level, there is always a great deal of experience and knowledge in the class itself, and we need to draw on that. The invitation to candidates is thus to get involved.

As noted, my intention relating to the 4 days of class contact is to review, summarise, explain and think about the readings and the key concepts relevant to this course. In particular, I want to explore and return often to some linked perspectives:

- the idea that all aspects of disputes/conflict are inter-linked (e.g. at a general level, *cause of conflict* is relevant to *process*, *resolution*, and *rebuilding*; more particularly, peacekeeping works with a complex inter-relationship between reducing tension, containing violence and furthering peace-building);
- the notion that the small is in the large (e.g. personal conflicts have close similarities to things that happen in groups, or indeed at the international level);
- it may be more useful to think of processes by which disputes and conflicts are ‘managed’, rather than ‘resolved’;
- concepts of ‘closure/forgiveness/finality’ are central to the understanding of grief/grievance and attempts at ‘management/resolution’...

It should quickly become clear to participants, that the issues we deal with are, of course, central to the human condition and as such are being played out daily, including in our own lives. Humans compete and sometimes that leads to dispute or conflict. What’s more, the process is very often done in ‘groups’, not just by individuals. When those groups are *states*, we have international dispute/conflict. When those groups are sports teams, we generally have clear frameworks for the ‘combat’, including processes for ‘resolution’ (such as referees). But for all the diversity of fact and context, actually there is remarkable similarity in the basics.

By the *end of the course*, the learning goals are that candidates should be able to demonstrate:

- active engagement with the class and with the ideas, including the ability to summarise and comment on key aspects of the reading material;
- understanding of the core concepts and theories of conflict resolution across a wide range of scenarios, including the background and issues in any specific peacekeeping operations case studies;
- understanding of third party intervention methods in disputes/conflicts (especially the operation of negotiation, conciliation, mediation, arbitration and adjudication);
- understanding of the changing goals, structures, roles and functioning of one form of such intervention, via peace operations; and
- good skills of writing, argument and analysis on agreed subject areas.

Learning Commitment

The learning objectives set for each course are demanding and, to achieve them, candidates must make a significant commitment in time and effort to reading, studying, thinking, and completion of assessment items outside of contact time. Courses vary in design but all require preparation and learning before the first day of contact. Intensive courses usually also require further study after the contact period. Expressed in input terms, the time commitment required usually translates to 65-95 hours (excluding class contact time) per course.

Readings

A comprehensive set of reading material is supplied, but this is only a selection from the very substantial body of literature on these subjects. This means that it is relatively easy for candidates to undertake more detailed exploration of any issue. Internet and library materials are extremely valuable supplements. A list of resources is provided for further reading and research.

Assessment Requirements

This course is assessed by test conducted via email, not by written assignment.

There is no magic bullet in assessment. The key is to find methods that are effective and which both facilitate and measure ‘learning’ as relevant to the course. Previously, I have used individual essays which give candidates the opportunity to build their own research and writing. However, I have found this does not produce a very good “fit” between course objectives, the intensive teaching method, and assessment. Hence in 2007, I am trying to tighten this by another method trialled in other courses. Hence, I spend some time in this course outline setting out the detail of processes for assessment. This is not because I intend the teaching to be completely dominated by tests and exams. Rather, it is for clarity, and to establish the framework so that we can bear this in mind as we go through the materials.

There are broadly four aspects that make up the assessment:

- Attendance and *reasonable* participation is expected at classes – this is not graded, but is a matter of “terms”, meaning full attendance and some *reasonable* engagement in class, is required to be eligible for a grade other than a C (if that is achieved in the test/exams). By ‘reasonable’, I mean that a person will on a number of occasions across the 4 days, speak, ask questions, and show some engagement with the reading materials and discussion. In exceptional circumstances, candidates may of course be excused attendance with some appropriate agreement on making up the coverage e.g. writing comments on some of the readings. But wherever possible, this should be done in advance, please. Note again: there is no requirement to do the readings before each class, but a reasonable familiarity will assist in meeting the learning objectives.
- Exams *and/or* Terms test:
 - **40 minute open book (voluntary) terms test (20%): Saturday 21 April 2007, 10.00am - 10.40am**
 - **100 minute open book exam (40% or 50% double-chance): Saturday 12 May 2007, 9.00am - 10.40am**
 - **100 minute open book exam (40% or 50% double-chance): Saturday 2 June 2007, 9.00am - 10.40am**

Details of Assessment

The test and exams work on a “double chance” basis - meaning that if the test is taken, it will count for 20% of the final grade, provided the combination of final grade and both examinations produces

a higher mark than the examinations alone; otherwise, the examinations will count for 100% of the marks for this course. It is strongly advised that you take the sit the voluntary test. In previous years, students have done remarkably better in the exams with this practice and the ability to learn from feedback provided.

The test and exams will be done via the email and internet - meaning that candidates need to get to a computer and have access to email at the relevant time, do the test/exams and email it back in time. All are 'open book', so candidates have access to such resources as are relevant. But every script must still be individually answered and composed in a candidate's own words – for consistency, it is now routine for every script done in such circumstances to be tested via the clever programmes that pick up plagiarism (see below).

The default time for the TEST is 10.00am - 10.40am on Saturday 21 April 2007; and for the EXAMS, 9.00am - 10.40am on Saturday 12 May 2007 and again on Saturday 2 June 2007.

However, in exceptional circumstances, if a person cannot make the exact time, we can discuss individual alternatives. I will, of course, expect, and seek agreement from the class, that no candidate will reveal the contents of any questions until all have completed the assessment. In any event, the relevant scripts will be emailed to each candidate 10 minutes before the scheduled time. **For the TEST, the completed script must be emailed back in no more than 50 minutes from that time (ie. 9.50am); and for the EXAMS, it will be 110 minutes.**

The formula used for assessment

In assessing this course, 12 questions will be set from the 15 'thought pegs' that will be established as the key learning/assessment framework for this course. Of those, 3 will be designated as relevant to the terms test, but only 2 will actually appear on that paper. 6 will be designated for the first exam, but only 5 will appear. This formula will be repeated again for the final exam. The format used in every single question is the same. It comprises a statement, followed by the instruction: "Do you agree? Give reasons". All questions are of equal value. The amount of TIME that should be devoted to each question is 20 minutes.

To assist students further, the following is a broad description of the grading system used in this course:

- A range:** Close answer to the question, displaying excellent levels of writing, analysis and originality (i.e. interesting thoughts and ideas advanced which are the candidate's, well argued and positioned relative to the literature and issues and coverage of the topic.
- B range:** All the above at good levels; solid understanding of the topic and materials, but with a number of the higher range measures not sufficiently met.
- C range:** Adequate (e.g. no major defects or gaps in expression, answer to question, etc); reasonable understanding of materials and concepts.
- D and below:** Insufficient attention to writing and question (e.g. poor expression, many spelling mistakes, major gaps in what was read); poor understanding of materials or question; no real attempt made to produce an answer tied to the question and showing understanding of the issues.

From these broad descriptions, it should be clear that the course expects and rewards good expression, as well as good understanding of the issues. And all this must be done AT PACE – meaning that preparation is essential, so is attention to detail.

Students should keep a copy of all submitted work.

ANZSOG candidates taking this course as an elective should note that they take it for 24 points, and not 15 points. Accordingly, the learning outcomes to be achieved by ANZSOG candidates are wider and deeper than those expected for non-ANZSOG candidates. The content of those learning outcomes, and the means whereby they will be assessed, will be negotiated and confirmed with the Course Coordinator at the start of the course.

Penalties

The ability to plan for and meet deadlines is a core competency of both advanced study and public management. Failure to meet deadlines disrupts course planning and is unfair on students who do submit their work on time. It is expected, therefore, that you will complete and hand in the assessments at the times stipulated. ***Marks will be deducted at the rate of 3 for every minute for which the test/exam scripts are late.***

If ill-health, family bereavement or other personal emergencies prevent you from meeting the deadline for submitting a piece of written work or from attending class to make a presentation, you can apply for and may be granted an extension to the due date. Note that this applies only to extreme unforeseen circumstances and is not necessarily awarded. You should let your Course Coordinator know as soon as possible in advance of the deadline if you are seeking an extension.

Mandatory Course Requirements

To fulfil the mandatory course requirements for this course, you are required to:

1. Submit all assignments by the due date, unless you have been granted an extension;
2. Attend all contact sessions of the course. If you are unable to attend a session, you must inform the Course Coordinator as soon as possible and you may be required to submit a further item of assessment.

Communication of Additional Information

Additional information may be provided in class, by post, by email or via Blackboard.

FINAL NOTE FROM COURSE COORDINATOR

Please contact me if I can assist further – in particular, since our opportunities for direct interaction are focused on the week of lectures, please use telephone and email to discuss issues, raise questions, and generally to stay in touch - not least with each other as is useful for the course. As

soon as possible, I will send out email messages and contacts to you all and start a process of networking so you each know who the others are. Please make particular efforts to include any out of town (or country) candidates in your discussions and networks.

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student and Academic Services Office

The Faculty's Student and Academic Services Office is located on the ground and first floors of the Railway West Wing. The ground floor counter is the first point of contact for general enquiries and FCA forms. Student Administration Advisers are available to discuss course status and give further advice about FCA qualifications. To check for opening hours, call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Education/Law Kelburn Office

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, Education and Law is situated in the Easterfield Building - it includes the ground floor reception desk (EA 005) and offices 125a to 131 (Level 1). The office is available for the following:

- Duty tutors for student contact and advice.
- Information concerning administrative and academic matters.
- Forms for FCA Student and Academic Services (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

To check for opening hours, call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

General University Policies and Statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied. See the Victoria University Calendar available in hard copy or under 'About Victoria' on the VUW home page at www.vuw.ac.nz.

Student and Staff Conduct

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps are to be taken if there is a complaint. For information about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor or refer to the statute on the VUW policy website at www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct. The Policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct.

Academic Grievances

If you have any academic problems with your course, you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned; class representatives may be able to help you in this. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean. VUWSA Education Coordinators are available to assist in this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievances Policy which is published on the VUW website at www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means **no cheating**. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other student or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalised severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- An oral or written warning
- Cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- Suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website at www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html.

Notice of Turnitin Use

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine Turnitin (www.turnitin.com). Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. You are strongly advised to check

with your tutor or the Course Coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

Students with Impairments

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities the same opportunity as other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, please contact the Course Coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building (telephone (04) 463 6070, email disability@vuw.ac.nz). The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus or can be obtained from the School Office or DSS.

Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each Faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Māori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.

In addition, the Student Services Group (email student-services@vuw.ac.nz) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/.

VUWSA employs Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and Faculty delegates. The Education Office (telephone (04) 463 6983 or (04) 463 6984, email education@vuwsa.org.nz) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

Manaaki Pihipihinga is an academic mentoring programme for undergraduate Māori and Pacific students in the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade (back courtyard), Room 109D, and Room 210, Level 2, Railway West Wing. There is also a Pacific Support Coordinator who assists Pacific students by linking them to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria. Another feature of the programme is a support network for Postgraduate students with links to Postgraduate workshops and activities around Campus.

For further information, or to register with the programme, email manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz or telephone (04) 463 5233 extension 8977. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz or telephone (04) 463 5842.