POLS 490S: Interveners and Intermediaries in International Conflict
Fall 2006

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Office Hours: 9-11 AM on Wednesdays or by appointment
Course materials and grades will be posted on Blackboard

Overview:
International conflicts are often discussed in terms of two sides fighting over an issue, yet many conflicts are considerably more complex in practice. This seminar will consider how third parties can influence the dynamics and outcomes of international disputes. We will specifically explore the roles of outside actors as humanitarian interveners, mediators and peacekeepers. The scope of the course will include both intrastate (civil) and interstate conflict. We will not only discuss the theory behind third-party activity, but we will also focus on the practical implications through student-led case studies and participation in a computer simulation.

Grading:
2 Case study papers (20% each), Final Paper (40%), Simulation (10%), Participation (10%)

Paper extensions will only be granted with proper documentation. Late case study papers will be deducted one letter grade per day late, beginning at the end of the class in which it is due. No credit will be given to any final paper turned in after 5:00 on the day of the final exam (12/20). All work must be the original work of the student, with no assistance from any other individuals.

Case study papers: Each topic in the latter part of the course has an accompanying case study that we will discuss in class along with the theoretical concepts. Each student will choose two of these case studies and write a paper on each one. The students will need to research the conflicts using a combination of case histories and academic books or articles.

Each paper consists of two parts. The first part, due at the start of the respective class period, should give a historical account of the case in question. This part should include a description of the relevant actors, the issues in question, the involved third parties and the barriers to settlement. The second part, due a week after the case is discussed should include an assessment of how the case helps us better understand the topic for that class. This should be a concise and thoughtful presentation of the relevant debates in the literature and whether the case lends support to some lines of argument more than others. This second part should also consider if there are any unanswered questions that arise from the case.

Each part should be between two and three pages in length. Each student will also be responsible for helping lead discussion about their cases during class. The first part of
the paper, plus the student’s role in facilitating course discussion will be 50% of the paper’s grade. The second part will be the remaining 50% of the grade.

**Final paper:** Students will turn in a final paper at the end of the course. They will have a choice of topics from a prompt distributed in class. In the paper, students should thoughtfully engage the theoretical concepts in class – i.e., they should avoid simply reciting the presented arguments – and be able to make a clear argument supported with knowledge of real-world examples.

**Simulation:** We will spend one class period in a computer lab, where we will simulate a mediation environment. This will be done using a computer package designed for experimental research. After the simulation, students will write a one-page paper describing how they performed in the simulation and what they learned in the process.

**Participation:** Students should come to each class prepared to discuss that day’s reading. They will be assessed based on their ability to answer questions posed to the class and their willingness to ask thoughtful questions. Participation is crucial to the learning process in such a small seminar environment. Effective participation requires that the students do all of the assigned reading, but they are encouraged to read for overall content and to not get lost in the details of each text. One of the goals of this course is to refine the students’ ability to engage the academic literature efficiently.

**Texts:**


Additional materials, as well as the assigned readings from the Bercovitch & Rubin and Princen texts, will be available through Reserves Direct.
Schedule:

I. Overview

8/31 Introduction to the Course

9/5 Prevalence and Importance of Third-Party Intervention
Readings: Regan – Chapter 2.


9/7 Introduction to Humanitarian Intervention


9/12 Introduction to Mediation
Readings: Princen – Chapter 1.


9/14 Introduction to Peacekeeping
Readings: Regan – Chapter 1.

II. Knowing the Relevant Actors

9/19 Self-Interested States in Relative Anarchy
Readings: Regan – Chapter 3.

9/21 International Governance Organizations
Readings: Jon Pevehouse, Timothy Nordstrom, and Kevin Warnke.


9/26 The UN


9/28 NGO’s and Individuals


III. Humanitarian Intervention

10/3 Sovereignty vs. Negligence: The Ethical Dilemma of Intervention
Example: Kosovo (1999)

10/5-10/12 The Changing Legal Basis for Intervention


Example: Bosnia (1995)

10/17-10/19 What Affects the Efficacy of Intervention?
Readings: Regan – Chapters 4-6.

Example: Zaire (1967)

IV: Mediation

10/24-10/26 Setting the Stage: Adversary and Mediator Objectives
Readings: Princen – Chapters 2-5.

Example: Carter in the DPRK (1994)

10/31 Form Matters: Mediation Styles

Example: Russo-Japanese War (Portsmouth-1905)

11/2 Neutral vs Biased Mediation


Example: Central American Civil Wars (Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua)

11/7 Mediation by a State


Example: Israel-Egypt (Camp David-1978)

11/9 Mediation by an IGO


Example: October War (1973)

11/14  Mediation by an NGO or Individual


Example: Argentina-Chile (1978-1984)

11/16  Does Culture Matter?


Example: Syria-Israel (1974-1994)

11/21  What Affects the Efficacy of Mediation?

Example: Falklands War (1982)

11/28  Mediation Simulations

V: Peacekeeping

11/30-12/5 Third Parties as the Necessary Ingredient for Credible Commitments
Readings:  Walter – Chapters 1, 2, 7.

Example: Rwanda (1994)
12/7  More than Blue Hats: Establishing Viable Institutions
Readings:  Robert O. Keohane. “Political Authority after Intervention:
Gradations in Sovereignty.” In *Humanitarian Intervention*, edited
by J. L. Holzgrefe and Robert O. Keohane, 275-298. Cambridge:
Cambridge University, 1996.

Michael Ignatieff. “State Failure and Nation-Building.” In
*Humanitarian Intervention*, edited by J. L. Holzgrefe and Robert

Example: East Timor (1999)

12/12  What Affects the Efficacy of Peacekeeping?
Readings:  Walter – Chapters 3-6.

Example: Zimbabwe (1972-1979)

**Final paper due on 12/20 @ 5:00 PM**