MA in Global Peace, Security and Strategic Studies

Course Syllabus

POL422M Mediation, Negotiation and Conflict Resolution in Theory and Practice

Number of ECTS credits: 6

Time and Place: Classes on Wednesdays, 16:00-18:00 (Room: VeCo 1) and online when COVID restrictions are in place.

Contact Details for Professor

Name of Professors: Professors Zafer KIZILKAYA and Sean O’ DUBHGHAILL

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E-Mail: seanmarkodubhghail@gmail.com

Office hours: Wednesdays, 15:00-16:00 (please, schedule an appointment).

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**Course Description**

This elective module provides students with a comprehensive overview of the main theories and approaches to mediation, negotiation, and conflict resolution. The course draws on major case studies of successful resolution of different types of conflicts across the globe and challenges students to assess and practice core approaches to mediation and negotiation of conflicts in different scenarios, with an emphasis on the role of culture.

The course brings together different strands from the sub-disciplines of conflict resolution, negotiation, and mediation in order to provide students with a solid grounding in diplomatic and non-violent approaches to peace-making. The course also includes sessions provided by conflict resolution experts and practitioners from, inter alia, the EU, NATO, and non-governmental organizations.

The focus of the course will be more on political questions such as the forms and causes of armed conflict and the means of conflict resolution. However, insights from other disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, philosophy, psychology as well as business administration will broaden our understanding of the methods employed in conflict resolution.

**Course Learning Objectives (CLO)**

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

**In terms of knowledge:**

- Learn different perspectives on what causes conflict and under what conditions cooperation is more likely to succeed;
- Learn the role of state and non-state actors in causing, preventing and ending violent conflict;
- Learn conflict resolution mechanisms and tools used by regional and international institutions and organizations;
- Apply multi-disciplinary insights from other disciplines (such as sociology, business administration and anthropology) to concrete policy issues in order to understand the methods of negotiation, mediation, and conflict resolution.

**In terms of skills**

- Use appropriate referencing and bibliographic methods;
- Demonstrate effective oral presentation skills;
- Demonstrate effective and integrative team-work;
- To learn the steps involved in formulating and writing a policy paper;
- Use appropriate negotiation and mediation skills within the context of contemporary conflict situations.

**In terms of attitudes, students should develop in this course:**

- A critical attitude for “life-long learning”;
- An attitude of open-mindedness and self-critical reflection with a view to self-improvement;
- An open attitude towards inter-cultural team-work.
### LINK BETWEEN PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES, COURSE OBJECTIVES, TEACHING METHODS, ASSIGNMENTS AND FEEDBACK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Course Learning objectives addressing the Programme Objectives (testable learning objectives)</th>
<th>Methods used to Teach Course Objectives and numbers/types of assignments used to test these learning objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A2. Knowledge of core actors, organizations, and players at the national, regional and global level – both in the state and non-state actor realm | To learn the role of state and non-state actors in causing, preventing and ending violent conflicts. Learn conflict resolution mechanisms and tools used by regional and international institutions and organizations. | Lecture, discussion, student essays and ‘Mediation and Negotiation’ Simulation.  
- Mediation and Negotiation Simulation in Weeks 12 and 13;  
- First essay (policy paper) on applying theories of CR to a concrete policy issue (2,000 - 2,500 words)  
- Second essay on the role of culture in conflict resolution (CR) theory |
| A3. Knowledge of major processes, developments and dynamics related to conflicts and the promotion of peace and security | To learn different perspectives on what causes conflict and under what conditions cooperation is more likely. To learn the key mechanisms used in transcending conflicts | Lectures will cover key concepts and issues, and readings will provide specific examples.  
- First essay (policy paper) on applying theories of CR to a concrete policy issue (2,000 - 2,500 words)  
- Second essay on the role of culture in conflict resolution (CR) theory and practice (2,000 - 2,500 words). |
| A4. Knowledge of a wide range of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Tools, skills and frameworks required for graduate research, academic writing and thesis-writing | To learn the steps in formulating and writing a policy paper.  
To learn how to formulate a research question, choose an appropriate research method and to write an essay on the role of culture in conflict resolution. | Lectures will cover the steps in writing a policy paper and an essay, highlighting the major differences between the two.  
- First essay (policy paper) on applying theories of CR to a concrete policy issue (2,000 - 2,500 words)  
- Second essay on the role of culture in conflict resolution (CR) theory and practice (2,000 - 2,500 words). |
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **B1. Ability to apply acquired understanding to concrete ‘real-life’ issues and challenges in the areas of global peace, security, and strategy** | To apply theoretical concepts to concrete policy issues in three main domains:  
• Conflict theory and the question of “Why do people fight?” (Apply within the context of the Syrian Civil War)  
• Conflict resolution theory and the question of “How can people transcend their incompatibilities? (Apply within the context of the Syrian Civil War)  
• Negotiation and Mediation Theory (Apply within the context of the peacemaking efforts in Syria) | Lecture, discussion, student essays and ‘Mediation and Negotiation’ Simulation  
• Mediation and Negotiation Simulation in Weeks 12 and 13;  
• First essay (policy paper) on applying theories of CR to a concrete policy issue (2,000 - 2,500 words) |
| **B2. Ability to develop and apply ideas and arguments emanating from interdisciplinary theory, concepts, and paradigms in the formulation of academic and/or policy-relevant analyses** | To apply multi-disciplinary insights from other disciplines (mainly business administration and anthropology) to concrete policy issues in order to broaden our understanding of the methods of conflict resolution as well as of the role of culture in this field. | Lectures will cover how negotiation and mediation are approached in other disciplines such as business administration and law.  
An anthropological reflection will be presented on the role of culture in conflict resolution.  
• Mediation and Negotiation Simulation in Weeks 12 and 13;  
• First essay (policy paper) on applying theories of CR to a concrete policy issue (2,000 - 2,500 words) |
<p>| <strong>B3. Ability to develop and apply professional skills related to the field of security and strategic studies through experiential learning, simulations, professional skills, workshops, internships, or the Capstone Practicum Course</strong> | To learn how to apply professional skills related to the fields of negotiation and mediation through a simulation. | Mediation and Negotiation Simulation in Weeks 12 and 13. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| D1. Ability to develop and communicate arguments, recommendations, and research results in a convincing, precise and effective manner in **written form** | To learn how to carry out independent research. To write clearly and effectively. | • First essay (policy paper) on applying theories of CR to a concrete policy issue (2,000 - 2,500 words)  
• Second essay on the role of culture in conflict resolution (CR) theory and practice (2,000 - 2,500 words). |
| D2. Ability to develop and communicate arguments, recommendations, and research results in a convincing, precise and effective manner through the **spoken word** | To learn how to carry out research within a team. To speak and present clearly and effectively. | Mediation and Negotiation Simulation in Weeks 12 and 13. |
| E1. An attitude of open-mindedness, academic integrity, critical and self-critical reflection with a view to continuously contribute to rigorous analysis and academic debates | To critically reflect on one’s own assumptions about international conflict resolution. | Lecture, discussion, student essays and ‘Mediation and Negotiation’ Simulation.  
• Mediation and Negotiation Simulation in Weeks 12 and 13;  
• First essay (policy paper) on applying theories of CR to a concrete policy issue (2,000 - 2,500 words)  
• Second essay on the role of culture in conflict resolution (CR) theory |
| F1. Ability to work effectively in a team with a commitment to supporting the community of learners through mutual support and leadership | To learn how to carry out and present research within a team. | Lecture, discussion and ‘Mediation and Negotiation’ Simulation.  
• Mediation and Negotiation Simulation in Weeks 12 and 13. |
| F2. Interpersonal skills, including the ability to network at professional events, blog-writing, conference-organizing and policy analysis writing-skills. | To learn how to write a policy paper. | Lecture explaining the steps in writing a policy paper.  
• First essay (policy paper) on applying theories of CR to a concrete policy issue (2,000 - 2,500 words). |
Main Course Materials (please note that you can find the readings for each week and session in the Course Schedule section below):

The course material consists of powerpoint presentations, lecture notes and readings from the textbook. Powerpoint presentations will be made available after the respective classes have taken place. A week-by-week overview of the course readings can be found below alongside a presentation of class’s themes and topics.

The syllabus, powerpoint presentations, and important messages will be uploaded to the Vesalius portal ‘Canvas’. Students are expected to visit this site regularly to keep abreast of course evolutions. The professor is expected to upload relevant material in a timely manner.

Course material marked as ‘suggested readings’ and ‘additional sources’ are helpful for research and to gain an increased understanding, but which are not mandatory. This material can be found online or will be made available upon individual request.

Textbook:

Recommended References books:


Active Learning and Intensive ‘Reading around the Subject’: Additional Sources, Recommended Journals and Websites:

Learning should be an active and self-motivated experience. Students who passively listen to lectures, copy someone else’s notes, and/or limit their readings to required chapters are unlikely to develop their critical thinking and expand their personal knowledge system. These students often fail to demonstrate a critical approach in exams and essays. Students are strongly recommended to have an updated understanding of developments related to this course and related to their wider Programme. Active and engaged learning will turn out to be enriching to the overall course and class discussions. Students are invited to deepen their understanding of both theoretical and current issues from a variety of sources. Please find a list of suggestions compassing the entire course below. You are encouraged to read and browse in the leading journals of the discipline of Conflict Resolution.

Leading Journals in Conflict Studies

| International Affairs; Foreign Policy Analysis; Foreign Policy; International Security; European Journal of International Relations; Cooperation and Conflict; Security Dialogue; International Studies Quarterly; International Studies Review; Security Studies; Contemporary Security Policies; European Security; Journal of Peace Research; Journal of Conflict Resolution; Negotiation Journal; Dispute Resolution Journal; Conflict Resolution Quarterly. |
Websites of Interest:
https://www.beyondintractability.org
http://www.understandingwar.org/
https://www.crisisgroup.org/
https://www.eip.org/
https://www.europeanresolution.com/en/european-institute-for-conflict-resolution/about/

Work Load Calculation for this Course:

This course counts for 6 ECTS, which translates into 150 – 180 hours for the entire semester for this course. This means that you are expected to spend roughly 10 hours per week on this course. This includes 2 hours of lectures or seminars per week and 8 hours ‘out of class’ time spent on preparatory readings, studying time for exams as well as time spent on preparing your assignments. Please see below the estimated breakdown of your work-load for this course.

Time spent in class: 2 hours per week / 28 hours per semester
Time allocated for course readings: 6 hours per week / 84 hours per semester
Time allocated for preparing for the negotiation and mediation simulation: 25 hours
Time allocated for preparing for the first essay: 20 hours
Time allocated for preparing for the second essay: 20 hours
Number of reading pages per week: 70 pages
Total hours for this Course: 177 hours

Course Schedule (Overview)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title of the session and major deadlines (where applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| W1  | 10 February | Introduction to the Course and Overview of Course and Requirements  
|     |             | Introduction to Conflict Resolution: The theory                                                                          |
| W2  | 17 February | The resolution of conflicts between states  
|     |             | Guest lecture: Anna Penfrat (Senior Policy Officer, EPLO)  
<p>|     |             | She will have a 30-45 minutes presentation on the Peacebuilding initiatives at the EU level and the role of non-governmental organizations in conflict resolution. |
| W3  | 24 February | The resolution of conflicts between states and non-state actors: civil wars, ethnic and state formation conflicts |
| W4  | 03 March    | Culture and Conflict: The role of culture in instigating conflict                                                        |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| W5   | 10 March | Preventing, containing, and ending violent conflict: Peacekeeping and Peace-making  
*Guest lecture: Onur Sultan (Former NATO Officer and PhD Candidate at the University of Antwerp)*  
*He will have a 30-45 minutes presentation on the conflict in Yemen and reflect on the attempts to resolve it.* |
| W6   | 17 March | Post-war reconstruction, peacebuilding, and reconciliation |
| W7   | 24 March | **First essay by 23:59 on 24 March.**  
*To be submitted on Canvas, which uses Turnitin to detect plagiarism.* |
| W8   | 31 March | Culture, Religion and Conflict Resolution: How does culture play (can/should play) a role in resolving conflicts? |
|      | 05-18 April | **Spring Recess** |
| W9   | 21 April | International Negotiation: The theory. |
| W10  | 28 April | Introduction to Mediation: The theory |
| W11  | 05 May | Culture and negotiation behaviour: How do cultures affect negotiation / mediation behaviour?  
*Contact and agree with the instructor about the topic for the second essay before 05 May.* |
| W12  | 12 May | Negotiation and Mediation Simulation I |
| W13  | 19 May | Negotiation and Mediation Simulation II  
*After-action report and group presentation by 23:59 on 21 May.* |
| W14  | 26 May | Conflict Resolution, contemporary and future challenges  
**Second essay by 23:59 by 23:59 on 28 May.**  
*To be submitted on Canvas, which uses Turnitin to detect plagiarism.* |
|      | 31 May – 06 June | Pre-exam study week |
| W15  | 09 June | Review of the course |
Detailed Session-by-Session Course Outline

Week 1 (10 February 2021): Introduction to Conflict Resolution: The theory

Compulsory Reading:


Suggested Readings:


Week 2 (17 February 2021): The resolution of conflicts between states

The study of interstate conflict represents the touchstone of the field of international relations. In the last couple of decades, scholars of interstate conflict have increasingly shifted their focus from “war” to lower levels of conflict such as “threats, displays, sanctions and etc.”. In this session, we will first examine some recent findings on interstate conflict and then explore the problems associated with the efforts to resolve the conflict between states.

Class organization:
16h00: presentation by Anna Penfrat (Senior Policy Officer, EPLO)
17h00: discussion about the resolution of conflicts between states

Compulsory Readings:


Week 3 (24 February 2021): The resolution of conflicts between states and non-state actors: Conflict resolution in civil wars, ethnic and state-formation conflicts

Since the end of World War II, revolution and other forms of war within nations has been far more common than interstate war between nations. In the first part of this session, we will examine the conditions that make individuals willing to participate in organized armed violence against their own government. We will then explore the problems associated with the efforts to resolve civil wars, including third party intervention to settle or resolve an intrastate conflict.

The other predominant form of armed conflict within nations is ethnic conflict. Ethnic identity and ethnic conflict are especially prevalent in many regions of the Third World because the formal boundaries of the nation-states (especially in Africa and parts of Asia) were drawn with little or no regard for the geographic distribution of “nations” of people who shared a common language, religion, culture and heritage. Thus, many Third World nations are characterized by multiple ethnic groups coexisting (uneasily) as citizens of a single nation state and/or identifiable ethic groups being
divided between two or more nation states. In the second part of this session, we will first examine ethnic divisions that contribute to conflict in the Third World. We will then explore the problems associated with the efforts to resolve ethnic and state-formation conflicts.

Class organization:
16h00-17h00: presentation and discussion about conflict resolution in civil wars
17h00-18h00: presentation and discussion about conflict resolution in ethnic and state-formation conflicts.

Compulsory Reading (Civil wars):

Suggested Readings (Civil wars):

Compulsory Reading (Ethnic and state-formation conflicts):

Suggested Readings (Ethnic and state-formation conflicts):


This lecture assesses the manner in which culture, shared and diverging values and civilizations come into conflict. The class begins with an assessment by Samuel Huntington that ‘Civilizations are destined to clash’ and traces a line forward in time to more recent developments in the fields of multiculturalism and interculturalism.

This class draws upon a wealth of cultural anthropological material in order to rethink the fracture lines along which cultures are thought to (co-)exist and the conditions that give rise to conflict.

Compulsory Readings:

Suggested Readings:


Week 5 (10 March 2021): Preventing, containing and ending violent conflict: Peacekeeping and Peacemaking

Class organization:
16h00: presentation by Onur Sultan (Former NATO Officer and PhD Candidate at the University of Antwerp)
17h00-18:00: Peacekeeping and Peace-making

Compulsory Reading:


Suggested Reading:


Week 6 (17 March 2021): Postwar reconstruction, peacebuilding and reconciliation

Compulsory Reading:


Suggested Reading:


Week 7 (24 March 2021): Review session and the submission of the first essay

First essay by 23:59 on 24 March.
To be submitted on Canvas, which uses Turnitin to detect plagiarism.

Week 8 (31 March 2021): Culture and Conflict Resolution

This lecture examines culture, conflict resolution and conflict transformation from a variety of disciplines. The lecture examines the manner in which conflict resolution can be achieved, the role that culture plays in that process and reviews the question of whether multiculturalism might be advanced as a possible solution to the presence of conflict. The topic of conflict resolution is addressed from the perspective of multiple disciplines.
Compulsory Readings:


Suggested Reading:


Week 9 (21 April 2021): International Negotiation: The theory.

Compulsory Readings:


Suggested Readings:


Week 10 (28 April 2021): Introduction to Mediation: Theory

Compulsory Readings:


Suggested Readings:


Week 11 (05 May 2021): Culture and Negotiation Behaviors

This lecture examines how culture can pose a barrier to clear communication in the domain of negotiations. The class begins with a review of stereotypy (the relation of stereotypes to real life) and the manner in which that can foreclose particular kinds of positive cultural encounters. Issues
touched upon concern our viewpoints, essentialization of people groups, imaginaries, homogeneity and universalism.

**Compulsory Readings:**


**Week 12 and Week 13 (12 and 19 May 2021): Negotiation and Mediation Simulation I and II**

Below, you find some reading to help you prepare for sessions 12 and 13. More information on the execution of the Negotiation and Mediation Simulation I and II will be provided during the course.

**Suggested Readings:**


Al Jazeera Centre for Studies. The Kurdish Question in the Syrian Revolution. Available at: [https://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/node/137](https://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/node/137)


**Week 14 (26 May 2021): Conflict Resolution, contemporary and future challenges**

Do not forget to submit your second essay by 12:00 (noon) on 28 May. It is to be submitted on Canvas, which uses Turnitin to detect plagiarism. We intentionally picked a deadline in Week 14 to give you more time to meet the other deadlines in the Final Exam Week.
This lecture interrogates the distinction between basic human needs, which are shared and universal, and the particularistic domain of culture in conflict and conflict resolution. It argues for a context-specific and sensitive analysis by examining the problems that are endemic to a one-size-fits-all approach that values homogeneity over heterogeneity. This lecture will also focus on future challenges, alternatives in conflict resolution and the possibility and availability of reconciliation.

Compulsory Readings:


Suggested Readings:


Week 15 (09 June 2021): Review of the Course

Review of the Course
Course Assessment: Assignments Overview

The students will be evaluated on the basis of their performance in the following assignments:

- First Essay (Week 7) 33.33%
- Mediation and Negotiation Simulation (Week 12 and 13) 33.34%
- Second Essay (Week 15) 33.33%

TOTAL 100%

Deadlines:
- First essay (policy paper) by **23:59 on 24 March**. To be submitted on Canvas, which uses Turnitin to detect plagiarism.
- Formation of groups for the Negotiation and Mediation Simulation by **05 April**,
- Contact and agree with the instructor about the topic for the second essay by **05 May**
- Negotiation and Mediation Simulation I, **12 May**
- Negotiation and Mediation Simulation II, **19 May**
- Submit Negotiation and Mediation Simulation Exercise after-action report and the presentation by **23:59, 21 May**.
- Second essay by **23:59 on 28 May**. To be submitted on Canvas, which uses Turnitin to detect plagiarism.

Grading Scale of Vesalius College

Vesalius College grading policy follows the American system of letter grades, which correspond to a point scale from 0 – 100. **All assignments (including exams) must be graded on the scale of 0-100.** To comply with the Flemish Educational norms, professors should on request also provide the conversion of the grade on the Flemish scale of 0-20. The conversion table below outlines the grade equivalents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Scale of 100 (VeCo Grading Scale)</th>
<th>Scale of 20 (Flemish System)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-100</td>
<td>17.0-20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>81-84</td>
<td>16.1-16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-80</td>
<td>15.3-16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>14.5-15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>69-72</td>
<td>13.7-14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>66-68</td>
<td>13.1-13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>62-65</td>
<td>12.3-13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>58-61</td>
<td>11.5-12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>54-57</td>
<td>10.7-11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-53</td>
<td>10.0-10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>0-9.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Description of Activities, Grading Criteria and Deadlines:

First Essay (Policy Paper) (1/3 of the grade, 33.33 %)

33.33 percent of your grade will be determined by a policy paper on the Syrian conflict. Your main task will be to link the theory of conflict resolution to a practical, real-life situation. In class, you will learn the theory and the instructor will explain it within the context of the Lebanese Civil War (1975 – 1990). In the policy paper, you will carry out a similar exercise within the context of the Syrian Civil War. Please note that your readings on this conflict will also help you in the Mediation and Negotiation simulations in Weeks 12 and 13 in which we will deal split in groups and try to negotiate on a possible solution to transcend incompatibilities in Syria.

Your policy paper will include:

- A problem statement that incorporates the research that you have conducted;

- **KEY SECTION I:**
  
  An analysis of the critical elements and dimensions of the policy problem: In this part, you are required to **explain the origin and the development of the conflict using a theory of your choice**. We will cover some of the key theories in class including the Conflict Dynamics theory (Galtung’s Conflict Triangle), the Basic Needs theory and the theory of Rational Calculation. You may opt for one or a combination of these theories or use alternatives based on your literature review.

- **KEY SECTION II:**

  A presentation of your policy options and a comparison of the available alternatives based on the criteria selected: In this part, **you are required to link your policy alternatives to the seven methods of transcending a conflict**. We will cover these methods during the course (shifting priorities, division, horse-trading, sharing control, leaving control to an external actor, using conflict resolution mechanisms, leaving to oblivion).

  To be more specific, you will come up with three policy options in order to re-establish a functioning state structure in Syria. Autonomy, federalism, independence with or without integration, democratic state formation and similar solutions may be included in your proposals. This is of course not an exhaustive list and you may propose other alternatives based on your literature research.

- A policy recommendation on how the issue that you are addressing should be resolved: You must explain why you think your policy recommendation, and not some alternative, is the preferred solution to the problem. This implies that you must discuss the alternative policy recommendations explicitly, including their strengths and weaknesses.

Your essay is **due by 23:59 on 24 March on Canvas, which uses Turnitin**. When submitting to Canvas, use an informative file name, including your surname and the issue covered (for example “Smith_Syria Conflict”). Make sure you submit your paper in Word format (NO PDF). **NOTE: Late submission reduces the score 10 percentage points per day.** The essay should be submitted in Times New Roman font, 12 points type, 1.5 spaced. It should be between 2,000 and 2,500 words, **INCLUDING** every part of the paper (e.g., the cover page, footnotes, and the bibliography). Papers that deviate from the word range will be penalized.

**Grading Form for the first essay (policy paper) (33.33%)**

Your policy paper will be graded according to:

1) how clearly and thoroughly you define and analyse the policy problem;

2) the extent and clarity of your factual understanding of the issue, its causes, and its context, incorporating material from the scholarly articles;

3) how well you state and defend your assessment of what the policy options are to resolve this issue and why your proposal is preferable to the alternatives (see below for more details).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Fail</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction Problem Statement / (10)</strong></td>
<td>The problem statement is irrelevant or not well identified; the topic is not adequately contextualized; the outline is absent or flawed.</td>
<td>The introduction gives sufficient information on the problem statement, the topic and the outline. A combination of flaws hinders the author’s intention and objectives.</td>
<td>Good ability to identify a problem statement. Some redundancies. The outline is overall good and background information is relevant.</td>
<td>Clear and concise problem statement / Succinct outline of the structure and the main argument of the policy paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>An analysis of the critical elements and dimensions of the policy problem (25)</strong></td>
<td>Poor grasp and explanation of the policy issue, its causes, and its context. Inadequate review of the literature.</td>
<td>Not all information provided is relevant to the analysis of the problem statement. The literature review shows basic critical engagement.</td>
<td>Overall, the literature review is well conceived. Some minor imprecision in the selection of the literature; Some flaws in explaining the issue, its causes, and its context; fairly good critical abilities.</td>
<td>Clear identification and explanation of the factual understanding of the issue, its causes, and its context; excellent engagement with the references and the course material on the theory and practice of conflict resolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A presentation of policy options and a comparison of the available alternatives based on selected criteria; (35)</strong></td>
<td>The paper lacks distinguishable policy options; the selection of policy options is superficial; No clear evaluation of the policy options. No clear criteria selected or used.</td>
<td>The paper offers distinguishable policy options; Policy options are explained with some flaws; Some criteria are selected and used to compare the proposed policy alternatives.</td>
<td>Good critical analysis of the proposed policy alternatives. Minor flaws in the selection and the use of the criteria to distinguish between the proposed policy options.</td>
<td>Excellent analysis of the proposed policy alternatives. Excellent selection and use of different criteria to compare the proposed policy options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion (10)</strong></td>
<td>The conclusions mainly repeat previous sections; no critical evaluation or reflection on main findings; not clear in explaining why one proposal is preferable to the alternatives.</td>
<td>The conclusion explains why one proposal is preferable to the alternatives but lacks offering any policy implications to the theory and practice of conflict resolution.</td>
<td>The conclusion clearly explains why one proposal is preferable to the alternatives; it offers some policy implications to the theory and practice of conflict resolution.</td>
<td>The conclusion perfectly explains why one proposal is preferable to the alternatives; it offers substantial and well-grounded policy implications to the theory and practice of conflict resolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure (10)</strong></td>
<td>Loose structure; failure to provide most relevant information. Serious mismatch between the problem statement, policy alternatives, the evaluation of the alternatives and the conclusion.</td>
<td>Some flaws in the structure of the paper; not all information is relevant; some flaws in the transition between separate parts of the policy paper.</td>
<td>Overall, the paper is well-structured. Some minor flaws in the organization hinder the strength of the argument.</td>
<td>Coherent and logical structure; clear argument and the linkage between different parts of the paper make it a smooth read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Aspects (10)</strong></td>
<td>Incorrect expression/referencing system; Insufficient readings (less than 5)</td>
<td>Some flaws in the expression and the referencing systems; Sufficient number of sources (at least 5).</td>
<td>Overall correct use of language and referencing system; adequate number of sources (5-9 references).</td>
<td>Correct use of language and referencing system; Appropriate Number of Sources (10 or more references)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total ( / 100 points)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Mediation and Negotiation Simulation (33.34%)

In Weeks 9, 10 and 11, we will study the theory as well as the practical implementation of negotiation and mediation in international politics. Sessions 12 and 13 are devoted to the simulation exercise in which the students will apply the theoretical concepts studied to a concrete policy issue. Broadly speaking, the topic we will cover is the same as the first essay, the “Syrian Civil War”.

Since the Turkish-Russian agreement in March 2020, the violence in Syria has dropped significantly. Conflicting sides continue shelling and attacking enemy positions in an attempt to maintain the achieved gains and prevent any territorial loss. We will simulate a situation when there is a strong willingness from the international community to resolve the Syrian conflict and prepare for a political transition.

To execute the simulation, in Weeks 12 and 13, the students will be divided in four groups, negotiating three different positions (Groups 1, 2 and 3) under the mediation of Group 4.

- **Group 1** will represent Russia (a key supporter of the Syrian regime). The position of Russia can be summarized with the following arguments: maintaining the territorial integrity of Syria, requesting the withdrawal of armed forces which lack an invitation from the Syrian government and demanding the disarmament of the armed opposition groups.

- **Group 2** will represent Turkey (a key supporter of the Syrian opposition). The position of Turkey can be summarized with the following arguments: demanding a political change, requesting the establishment of safe zones in Northern Syria and the elimination of PYD which has links to PKK (PKK is listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey, US and the EU).

- **Group 3** will represent USA (a key supporter of the Syrian Kurds in North-Eastern Syria). The position of the US can be summarized with the following argument: demanding the establishment of an autonomous entity in north-eastern Syria.

- **Group 4** will play the role of the UN and act as a mediator using the tactics of mediation that we will cover in class. It will try to propose a roadmap and try to get an endorsement from the negotiating sides.

GROUPS 1, 2 AND 3: Please read through the literature and come prepared to defend and negotiate your position. The key points of your position are expressed above but you may enlarge the list based on your readings. Moreover, you can make amendments to your demands/policies depending on how negotiations proceed. Use the bargaining tactics that we will cover in the course. Remember, negotiation is about finding a common formula to shared problems. Do not consider it matter of winning or losing. Do not get stuck in fixed positions and avoid blocking improvement in the process. Instead, focus on the larger interests and seek compromise to come up with a formula that will work for all sides.

GROUP 4: Please read through the literature and come prepared to play the role of the mediator. Use the mediation cycle properly. You may opt for one or a combination of mediation approaches (facilitative, formulative, directive or manipulative).

The instructor will be the Chair during the simulation exercise and will only intervene when the discussion gets stuck on a particular issue. In week 12, we will start with a 5 to 10 minutes presentation from the groups in which they explain their overall position regarding the future of Syria. The presentations will highlight the expectations from the negotiations that we will hold in Weeks 12 and 13. We will then continue with the mediation and negotiation exercise in which each group will negotiate or mediate their position. At the end of the exercises, after Week 13, the groups will also draft an after-action report (maximum one-page) in which they will explain “WHAT HAPPENED: What went well? What went wrong? and LESSONS LEARNED FOR THE FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS OR MEDIATIONS.”
You are obliged to submit your after-action reports and the presentations by 23:59, 21 May on Canvas. When submitting to Canvas, use an informative file name, including your surname or group number (for example “Group1_Presentation 1, Group 2_Presentation Week 12, or Group 2_Post-Simulation Report”). **Make sure that you submit your reports in Word and presentations in Powerpoint format (NO PDF).** Your after-action reports should be submitted in Times New Roman font, 12 points type, 1.5 spaced. **It should be between 500 and 1,000 words (ideally 1 full page).** Your presentations should include maximum 7 slides including the introduction and the conclusion slides. You are not required to indicate your references in your post-simulation reports and presentations. These are aimed at preparing you for the negotiations (presentations) and identifying the key lessons learned after the execution of the negotiations (after-action reports).

**NOTE:** This is a group assignment and all group members will receive the same grade (Nothing individual). Therefore, all group members are expected to contribute to best of their abilities. I expect active participation from all group members, and I will question each individual about their grasp of the content. **Late submission reduces the score 10 percentage points per day (if you are late by 1 minute, your maximum point becomes 90%. It becomes 80% between 24 hours and 48 hours late, and so on).** To avoid problems with the computer or the Canvas website, you are strongly encouraged to submit the paper a few days before the deadline. More information on the execution of the Negotiation and Mediation Simulation will be provided during the course.

Your performance will be assessed through the following criteria:

- **Presentation skills (25%):** A group presentation of maximum 7 slides in which you will explain your group’s position and key arguments. This will take place in the beginning of Week 12.
- **Introducing strong arguments and persuasive examples (20%):** During the exercise in Weeks 12 and 13.
- **Leading discussion (15%):** This depends on your level of knowledge and how well you are prepared.
- **Engagement with the audience (15%):** During the exercise in Weeks 12 and 13.
- **After-action reports (25%):** After we finish the simulation in Week 13, you will submit this group report (one-pager) before 21 May. Please also submit your presentation before the deadline on 21 May.

**ASSESSMENT TABLE FOR THE NEGOTIATION AND MEDIATION SIMULATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Un satisfactory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation skills (25 points)</td>
<td>Very well structured; focused and clear presentation. Good use of visual aids (where provided)</td>
<td>Well-structured, mostly focused presentation.</td>
<td>Disorganized and unclear presentation. Visual aid is not or very clearly organized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**GRADING SCALE: **21-25</td>
<td>**GRADING SCALE: **13-20</td>
<td>**GRADING SCALE: **0-12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introducing strong arguments and persuasive examples (20 points)</td>
<td>Very well prepared by extensive knowledge of the policy that was adopted. Effective presentation of arguments by using persuasive examples: Very good knowledge of the most advantageous alternative and the BATNA (the best alternative to a negotiated agreement)</td>
<td>Well prepared by sufficient knowledge of the policy that was adopted. Presentation of arguments by using examples and by highlighting the policy positions. Good knowledge of the most advantageous alternative and the BATNA.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**GRADING SCALE: **17-20</td>
<td>**GRADING SCALE: **10-16</td>
<td>**GRADING SCALE: **0-9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Second Essay (33.33%)

You will write an essay that explores the role played by culture (and/or religion) in resolving international conflicts. You will either select the Syrian Civil war or another (historical or contemporary conflict) and will first briefly analyse how cultural differences have had an impact on instigating the conflict between the sides. Then, you will assess and criticize the way in which conflict resolution practices had considered or neglected the cultural dimension.

Please communicate with the instructor about your topic and get approval before starting to work on your paper. This should be done via email by Week 11 at the latest (05 May). Your essay is due by 23:59 on 28 May on Canvas, which uses Turnitin. When submitting to Canvas, use an informative file name, including your surname and the issue covered (for example “Smith_Somaliland”). Make sure you submit your paper in Word format (NO PDF). NOTE: Late submission will reduce your score 10 percentage points per day. The essay should be submitted in Times New Roman font, 12 points type, 1.5 spaced. It should be between 2,000 and 2,500 words, INCLUDING every part of the paper (e.g., the cover page, footnotes, and the bibliography). Papers that deviate from the word count will be penalized.

Papers should be structured in 4 sections, distinguishable by clear headings and subtitles (see the table below for more detail). Make sure that each section is coherent, and that the argument draws on and follows the subtitle you have chosen. The paper should be structured as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description and checklist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>This section clearly identifies the research topic and case study you have selected. It identifies a clear research question and outlines the structure of the research. <strong>Checklist:</strong> Introduce key factual information to understand your case study; Highlight the most problematic/worth-exploring aspects of your selected topic; Outline the structure of the paper and your main argument briefly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Description and checklist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part two – An analysis of how cultural differences had an impact on instigating the conflict between the sides.</td>
<td>This part offers an analysis of how cultural differences have had an impact on instigating the conflict between the sides. <strong>Checklist:</strong> Identify a relevant historical or contemporary conflict; Sum up a brief history of the conflict with an emphasis on key objectives of the conflicting sides; Explain how, and to what extent, culture has had an impact on causing violent conflict; Draw on facts and explanatory examples; use and synthesize sources and references to support your key arguments and address the research question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part three – analysis / assessment of the way conflict resolution practices had considered or neglected the cultural dimension</td>
<td>The third part assesses and criticizes the way conflict resolution practices have either considered or neglected the cultural dimension of conflict. <strong>Checklist:</strong> Explain if and how the conflicting sides developed mechanisms to settle or resolve their conflict; Sum up the regional or international efforts to resolve the conflict and criticize the timing and methodology adopted by the external actors; Explain how and to what extent the cultural dimension was considered in resolving the conflict; Highlight the good and practices in terms of the way the cultural dimension was respected; Draw upon facts, examples and data to analyse your topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>The last part presents the main concluding remarks. <strong>Checklist:</strong> Summarize your key findings; Critically assess your analysis and identify its limits. Do your findings offer policy implications? What needs to be done, based on your findings?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**System of bibliographic referencing**

Please use APA, MLA, Chicago, or Harvard style for your referencing.

For general guidance on “Acknowledging, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Sources”, please consult this overview developed by the writing center at University of Wisconsin-Madison and available at: [http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf).

Please, also consult the following short guide for “Acknowledging, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Sources”, available at: [writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf)

For direct quotes, page number, when available, should be **cited** in the text of your work.

**Harvard style of referencing - Examples:**

**In-text citation:**

Both unities of discourses and objects are formed “by means of a group-controlled decision” (Foucault, 2011:32).

Habermas acknowledges the crucial function of language as a “medium of domination and social force” (1974:17, in Forchtner, 2011:9).

**In your reference list:**

How to quote books:


How to quote chapters in edited books:

How to quote articles:

How to quote electronic sources:

Grading Form for the second essay (30%)
The following criteria will be applied in assessing your written work:

- Selection of a clearly focused topic,
- A logical, well-structured and well-organized analysis;
- Ability to summarize the role of culture in triggering a conflict;
- Critical understanding of how cultural aspects are considered or neglected in resolving a conflict.

See below for more details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fail</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>The research question is irrelevant or not well identified; the topic is not adequately contextualized; the outline is absent or flawed.</td>
<td>The introduction gives sufficient information on the research question, the topic and the outline. A combination of flaws hinders the author’s argument.</td>
<td>Good ability to identify a research question and to pose a relevant research question. Some redundancies. The outline is overall good and background information is relevant.</td>
<td>Clear and concise research question / Succinct outline of structure of the paper and main argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Question / Statement / (15)</strong></td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 0-7</strong></td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 8-10</strong></td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 11-13</strong></td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 14-15</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reviewing, understanding and summarizing the role of culture in instigating a historical or a contemporary conflict (20)</strong></td>
<td>The role of culture is vaguely or simply mentioned. Inadequate review of the literature. Weak engagement with the references and the course material on the topic of culture and conflict resolution. Severe conceptual oversimplification.</td>
<td>Sufficient engagement with the references and the course material on the topic of culture and conflict resolution; not all information provided is relevant to the analysis or the research question. The literature review shows basic critical engagement.</td>
<td>Overall, the literature review is well conceived. Some minor imprecision in the selection of the literature; Some flaws in explaining the role of culture in causing conflict between the sides; fairly good critical abilities.</td>
<td>Clear identification of academic arguments and debates; Good ability to compare and contrast key arguments; good justification and critical assessment of theoretical frameworks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 0-9</strong></td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 10-13</strong></td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 14-16</strong></td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 17-20</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis / Discussion (35)</strong></td>
<td>The analysis shows major pitfalls; the analysis is superficial; No clear explanation of the efforts applied to resolve the conflict; Weak explanation of how and to what extent the culture dimension was considered in resolving the conflict.</td>
<td>Sufficient ability to review relevant facts for the analysis. Core statements are not always supported by reference or evidence; not all information is relevant. Basic critical engagement.</td>
<td>Good critical analysis supported by good information and data; some flaws in the use of data and reference in support of one’s argument; Minor flaws in the argumentative line and the criticism towards the methods applied to resolve the conflict by paying attention to the cultural aspects.</td>
<td>Excellent use of evidence and references; Clear explanation of how and to what extent the culture dimension was considered in resolving the conflict; Critical evaluation of core assumptions of other authors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explanation of how and to what extent the ‘culture’ dimension was considered in resolving the conflict</strong></td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 0-17</strong></td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 18-24</strong></td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 25-29</strong></td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE: 30-35</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Conclusion (10)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The conclusions mainly repeat previous sections; no critical evaluation or reflection on main findings</th>
<th>The conclusions show some attempts to critically review the main findings</th>
<th>The conclusions show a good ability to engage critically with the topic and assess the main findings.</th>
<th>Succinct summary of key findings; Critical and open-minded evaluation of core arguments and results. Offers policy implications.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE:</strong> 0-4</td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE:</strong> 5-6</td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE:</strong> 7-8</td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE:</strong> 9-10</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Structure (10)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loose structure; failure to provide most relevant information. Serious mismatch between the second and third parts of the essay.</th>
<th>Some flaws in the structure of the paper; not all information is relevant; mismatch between different parts of the essay.</th>
<th>Overall, the paper is well-structured. Some minor flaws in the organization hinder the strength of the argument.</th>
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<td><strong>GRADING SCALE:</strong> 9-10</td>
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**Formal Aspects (10)**

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<th>Incorrect expression/referencing system; Insufficient readings (less than 5)</th>
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<td><strong>GRADING SCALE:</strong> 7-8</td>
<td><strong>GRADING SCALE:</strong> 9-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL (100)**

**SOURCES TO USE FOR THE FIRST AND SECOND ESSAYS:**

For the essays, you are highly recommended to refer to scholarly journals. A partial list would include:


Book reviews and news magazines, (such as Guardian, Newsweek, Le Monde, the Economist) do not count as scholarly journals. The same holds for encyclopedias (including Wikipedia) or websites, blogs or other similar sources. However, these are acceptable for adding factual information. Keep in mind that, scholarly journals will allow you to develop a more rigorous analytical understanding of the issue. The idea is to demonstrate that your understanding and analysis of the issue surpasses that of the average citizen in both depth and rigor. You will be graded on how clearly you state your topic and how thoroughly you have mastered the nuances of the issue by reading the articles in your bibliography.

**Vesalius College Attendance Policy**

As the College is committed to providing students with high-quality classes and ample opportunity for teacher-student interaction, it is imperative that students regularly attend class. As such, Vesalius College has a strict attendance policy.

Participation in class meetings is mandatory, except in case of a medical emergency (e.g. sickness). Students will need to provide evidence for missing class (doctor’s note). If evidence is provided, the missed class is considered as an excused class. If no evidence is provided immediately before or after the class, the missed class is counted as an absence.
Participation implies that students are on time: as a general rule, the College advises that students should be punctual in this regard, but it is up to the professor to decide whether to count late arrivals as absences, or not. If a student misses two classes in a row, his/her advisor will be notified.

Additional Course Policies

Late paper policy

The College considers late submissions as disruptive and disrespectful practices and strongly recommends students to work on their time management. Late papers will be assessed as follow:

- **Late submission reduces the score 10 percentage points per day** (if you are late by 1 second, your maximum point becomes 90%, until 24 hours after the deadline. The maximum point becomes 80% between 24 hours and 48 hours after the deadline, and so on).

- Students are strongly encouraged to submit papers at least an hour before the deadline. Problems with internet, printer, etc. will not excuse late submission.

In the event of exceptional circumstances which impede the delivery of assignments, a student may request an extension without penalty prior to the assigned due date. Students must accompany this request with a medical certificate or other proof of the extreme circumstance that impeded the fulfilment of the task. **In this case, the student should still submit the draft she/he has produced so far.**

Professors will examine the request and decide whether or not an extreme circumstance exists or does not exist. ‘Extreme circumstances’ must be significant, unpredictable and serious. These include medical treatment or distress for a family crisis or loss. These do not include time management and technical problems, inability to find sources, attending a wedding.

Academic Honesty Statement

Academic dishonesty is NOT tolerated in this course.

Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism (including self-plagiarism) are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity.

Following the College policy, cheating and plagiarism cases will be communicated in writing to the Associate Dean and submitted to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action.

If you refer to someone else’s work, appropriate references and citations must be provided. Grammar, spelling and punctuation count, so use the tools necessary to correct before handing in assignments.

Please consult the Section “Avoiding Plagiarism” in the College Catalogue for further guidance.

Turnitin

All written assignments that graded and count for more than 10% towards the final course grade need to be submitted via the anti-plagiarism software Turnitin. You will receive from your professor a unique password and access code for your Class.