Conflict is diverse in its nature and pervasive in society. We experience conflict in our families, with our roommates and friends, at work, and in broader society. It can be competitive, aggressive, violent, nonviolent, conciliatory, or even cooperative in nature. Sometimes we are involved directly and sometimes we feel very disconnected from manifestations of conflict. And while there are divergent forms of conflict, there are also numerous approaches to handle conflict—from escalating it, to avoiding it, to engaging it in a variety of manners. In this course, we will begin by examining what is conflict in its various forms and what are its divergent sources. We will look at both rebellion/social protest and then war/peace issues. Thereafter, we will explore different forms of managing conflict from conflict resolution to conflict transformation to theories of nonviolence and nonviolent action. Throughout the course, but in particular towards the end of the course, we will reflect on how we have been socialized to think about conflict. We will conclude the course by examining various alternatives in the aftermath of violent conflict and war as well as peace politics.

This course will cover theoretical perspectives as well as concrete examples of conflicts and those who are affected and engage them, including student protest in the 1960s in the US, anti-war and struggles of the poor in the US, the war in northern Uganda, and the apartheid and the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, among others. In this course, we strive to both learn about new conflicts as well as reflect on our own personal experiences with conflict. Active participation is critical in the class; alongside discussion, there will be several games and experiential exercises.

Sociology 094 and the Core Curriculum: This course is a part of the Social Science Core Curriculum. As such, it is designed to raise issues important to the study of society and human behavior as well as to expose students to the dynamics and dimensions of social interaction. The following components are included:

1) Perennial Questions: This course engages questions related to causality of conflict (human nature or social creation); the tension between peace and justice; the forces that socialize us regarding conflict; and questions concerning the potential of human agency within larger social structures. Throughout, we will seek to understand why there is so much conflict in this world? How can it be transformed from destructive conflict to more constructive forms? And what are each of our own personal orientations and possible roles in addressing social conflict?

2) Historical Perspective: We will look at socio-historical events such as the student protest in the 1960s, the Cold War, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. We will examine these as manifestations of larger socio-historical trends as well as examples of specific events.
3) **Cultural Diversity:** This course includes voices and perspectives from both scholars and practitioner/activists. We will engage perspectives from Europe, the United States, and Africa who cover a diverse span across ethnic origin, gender, race, age, sexual orientation, and social/economic class.

4) **Methodology of the Discipline:** This course explores work in the fields of sociology, conflict resolution, peace studies, communication studies, anthropology, and international relations. We examine narratives, historical accounts, and empirical research.

5) **Writing Component:** During the course, you will write one paper as well as complete a mid-term and final exam, where writing will be stressed.

6) **Creating a Personal Philosophy:** The aim of this course is to help you develop a greater awareness of social conflict, its divergent sources, and the plausible forms of engagement with conflict. You will be challenged to think critically about both conflict that you’ve observed and conflict in which you’ve participated, in some form. You will be encouraged to reexamine your role as an individual and what societal challenges help and hinder your own efforts to create change in the fields of conflict and peace.

**Reading:** Is required. There are 3 required texts, which you can buy at the BC bookstore or online, or read in Course Reserves at O’Neill Library. Articles will be posted on the Blackboard system or will be available through Online Course Reserves on the library website. As well, there are some articles that have direct URLs to go to and read online. Each week, I will alert you to where to find particular pieces. See the course outline for reading deadlines. You will notice that some weeks are more reading intensive than others, so plan accordingly. I also reserve the right to change some of the reading assignments depending on the needs of our class, so please check with me if you are reading more than one week in advance.

**Evaluation/ Your Grade:** You will be evaluated in a number of ways for this course. The following is the break-down for how your final grade will be compiled:

- **10%:** Class Presentation accompanied with short handout—Due SEPT 27
- **25%:** In class Midterm Exam—Due OCT 27
- **25%:** Paper—Due NOV 22
- **30%:** Final Take Home Exam—Due DEC 17, 12:30pm
- **10%:** Class Participation (attendance in class; participation in exercises; discussion questions, pop quizzes on readings)

**Note on Class Participation and Attendance:** No matter how good your written work is, you are required to participate in class discussion as an additional part of your grade. The definition of “contributing to class discussion” is saying something that shows you have done the reading, makes a connection between the discussion at hand and the reading or between ideas, and demonstrates that you are thinking. In this course you will be expected to be serious about reading, thinking, writing, and conveying your thoughts verbally to others in the classroom. All of these are difficult tasks. I am happy to help you develop these skills; please come talk to me about it. I’d also like to highlight that a critical aspect of class participation is listening attentively to others. You will be evaluated not only on your own efforts to contribute to class discussion, but also in your efforts to listen respectively to others and engage their ideas.
**Extra Credit:** I believe in the utility of acquiring insight and analysis from relevant events that occur outside the classroom. Therefore, I offer 2 points of extra-credit for attending speakers, demonstrations, films, etc. related to the content of this course. I require that you email me ahead of time to determine the relevance of the event and that you write a 1 page summary of the event and how it enhanced the learning we are doing in the course. If you so choose, you may take advantage of this opportunity a maximum of two times.

**Feedback:** I am interested in ensuring that you achieve the aforementioned learning objectives and that you get out of the course what you are personally seeking. Therefore, please keep me informed of what you would most like to learn about, what is working and not working for you in terms of course content and structure. I will make amendments as I see fit. If you have some kind of issue with course content or structure, I expect you to talk to me about it early on in the semester.

Please note that all final announcements about readings, deadlines, and assignments will be made in class. If you do miss a class, please be sure to check with a classmate about any pertinent announcements that were made.

**Required Texts:**

**Course Outline**

**Week 1: Sept 8 + Sept 10**

*Introduction to Conflict*
- Otomar J. Bartos and Paul Wehr, 2002. “Understanding Conflict” (Chapter 2 *Using Conflict Theory*)
- Máire A. Dugan, "Power"  
  [http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/Power/](http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/Power/)
- Michelle Maiese, "Addressing Injustice"  
  [http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/address_injustice/](http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/address_injustice/)

**ACTIVITIES:**
- Personal Orientation Towards Conflict
Week 2: Sept 13 + Sept 15 + Sept 17
Theories of Conflict & Its Sources

- Otmar J. Bartos and Paul Wehr, 2002. “Development of Incompatible Goals” and “Application to Civil Rights Struggle” (Chapter 3-4 in Using Conflict Theory)

ACTIVITIES:
- Game Theory Models of Conflict
- Conflict Spiral
- Conflict in Labword

Week 3: Sept 20 + Sept 22 + Sept 24
Rebellion/Social Protest


[**Note this week’s reading is particularly light; giving you much time to finish the entirety of Dorothy Day’s book, The Long Loneliness***]

ACTIVITIES:
- Film: Berkeley in the 60s
- Rebellious Collective Action

Week 4: Sept 27 + Sept 39 + Oct 1
September 27 + 29: Rebellion/Social Protest

- Audre Lorde, “The Masters Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House” (pp.224-228)
- Black Panther Party “What we Want, What we Believe” (pp.118-123)
- Harvey Milk, “The Hope Speech” (pp. 217-223)
- American Indian Movement, “Trail of Broken Treaties” (pp. 185-206)
- Students for a Democratic Society, “The Port Huron Statement” (pp. 60-70)
- Cesar Chavez, “Letter from Delano” (pp.141-145)
- Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail” pp. 80-99
OCT 1: Reflecting on Dorothy Day’s narrative

ACTIVITIES:
***Class Presentations on MONDAY SEPTEMBER 27***

Week 5: Oct 4 + Oct 6 + Oct 8
War and Peace

Week 6: Oct 13 + 15 (no class on Oct 11-Columbus Day)
War and Peace (Continued)
- Edward Luttwak, 1999. “Give War A Chance” (in Foreign Affairs Vol 78 (4))

ACTIVITIES:
Film: Secret Government/Fog of War
National Interests

Week 7: Oct 18 + Oct 20 + Oct 22
Conflict Resolution: Negotiation & Mediation
- “Mediation Works Inc” packet handout
- Roger Fisher and Bill Ury 1991 “Inventing Options for Mutual Gain” (in SIMSOC Participant’s Manual, pp. 87-95)

ACTIVITIES:
Hot Buttons
Buyer/Seller
Conflict Resolution Basics

Conflict Transformation


*** Midterm Exam on WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 27***

Week 9: Nov 1 + Nov 3 + Nov 5

Nonviolence Vs. Violence + Gandhi

- Francesca M. Cancian and James William Gibson, "Is War Inevitable?" (from *Making war/making peace: the social foundations of violent conflict*, edited by Cancian & Gibson, op. cit. Pp. viii-ix, 1-10)
- Margaret Mead, “Warfare is Only an Invention—Not a Biological Necessity”

ACTIVITIES:
Is War Inevitable?

Week 10: Nov 8 + Nov 10 + Nov 11

Theories of Nonviolent Action

- Robert Helvey, 2004. Pages 9-18, 47-66, and 87-100 and Figures 3 & 4. in *On Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: Thinking About the Fundamentals*

ACTIVITIES:
Film: *A Force More Powerful*

Week 11: Nov 15 + Nov 17 + Nov 19

Socialization and Culture + Framing Conflicts

- Elise Boulding, “History at Sword’s Point? The War-Nurtured Identity of Western Civilization” (In *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History*)
- Francesca Cancian, “A Conversation on War, Peace, and Gender”
ACTIVITIES:
Film: Tough Guise
Socialization for War
Framing Conflicts

Week 12: Nov 22 + Week 13: Nov 29 + Dec 1 + Dec 3
Possibilities for Peace After Violent Conflict

- Eric Brahm, "Peacebuilding and Reconciliation Stage"
- Priscilla Hayner, “The Truth and Reconciliation Commission” (excerpt from Unspeakable Truths)
- Martha Minow, “Vengeance, Retribution, and Forgiveness”
- Pumla Gobodo-Madikezela, “On Trauma and Forgiveness”
- Lynn Walker Huntley, “Conflict Resolution”
- John Paul Lederach, 1995. “Revolutionaries’ & ‘Resolutionaries” (from Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures)
- John Paul Lederach, “Structure: Lens for the Big Picture” (Chapter 4 in Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies)
- Amy Finnegan, 2010. “Fostering Forgiveness: Collective Efforts Amidst War in Northern Uganda” (Sociological Inquiry)

ACTIVITIES:
Film: Facing the Truth/Long Night’s Journey Into Day
Justice Versus Conflict Resolution

*** Paper due MONDAY NOVEMBER 22***

Week 14: Dec 6 + Dec 8
Politics of Peace
Paul Joseph, 2007. “From Mobilized to Conditional War” (Chapter 1 in Are Americans Becoming More Peaceful?)

ACTIVITIES:
No More War?
Do Peace Movements Matter?