George Mason University
Graduate Course Approval/Inventory Form

Please complete this form and attach a copy of the syllabus for new courses. Forward it as an email attachment to the Secretary of the Graduate Council. A printed copy of the form with signatures should be brought to the Graduate Council Meeting. Complete the Coordinator Form on page 2, if changes in this course will affect other units.

Please indicate:  ___X___ NEW  ____ MODIFY  ____ DELETE

Local Unit:  ICAR  Graduate Council Approval Date:

Course Abbreviation:  CONF  Course Number: 749

Full Course Title: World Religions, Violence, and Conflict Resolution

Abbreviated Course Title (24 characters max.): Wrld Relg Viol & Conf Res

Credit hours:  3  Program of Record: ICAR

Repeatable for Credit?  __D=Yes, not within same term  Up to hours
  __T=Yes, within the same term  Up to  hours
  X  N=Cannot be repeated for credit

Activity Code (please indicate):  _X__ Lecture (LEC) ___ Lab (LAB) ___ Recitation (RCT)
  ___ Studio (STU) ___ Internship (INT) ___ Independent Study (IND) ____ Seminar (SEM)

Catalog Credit Format  3 :3 : 0  Course Level: GF(500-600) ____ GA(700+) _X___

Maximum Enrollment: 20  For NEW courses, first term to be offered: Spring 2006

Prerequisites or corequisites: CONF 501 or CONF 801

(Course is being offered as CONF 695 “Special Topics” course in the spring 2005 semester)

Catalog Description (35 words or less): Please use catalog format and attach a copy of the syllabus for new courses. Examines the ways in which world religions play a role in conflict and conflict resolution. Investigates the ways each religion's values, world view, and hermeneutics can influence strategies for successful conflict interventions.

For MODIFIED or DELETED courses as appropriate:
Last term offered:  Previous Course Abbreviation:  Previous number:

Description of modification:

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:
Submitted by:  ________________________________ email: ________________
Department/Program:  ________________________________ Date: ________________
College Committee:  ___________N/A_________________________ Date: ________________
Graduate Council Representative:  ________________________________ Date: ________________
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
Course Coordination Form

Approval from other units:

Please list those units outside of your own who may be affected by this new, modified, or deleted course. Each of these units must approve this change prior to its being submitted to the Graduate Council for approval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit:</th>
<th>Head of Unit’s Signature:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graduate Council approval: ______________________________________________ Date: __________
Graduate Council representative: _______________________________ Date: __________
Provost Office representative: _______________________________ Date: __________
This course is designed to analyze the ways in which world religions play a role in conflict, war, peace making and conflict resolution. Every religion has a broad range of cultural resources and values that have formed the basis of personal and communal values that prevent or successfully manage conflict. On the other hand, war, violence and repression have been justified at one time or another by important representatives of every major religion. Understanding each religion’s values, world view, and, especially, the hermeneutics through which the religion changes and evolves, are the keys to discovering conflict resolution methodologies that may be effective in global and domestic violent contexts in which religion is playing some role.

Analyzing the role of religion in these phenomena is particularly challenging due to the fact that human beings come to be engaged in war or peace making out of a host of complex motivating factors, only one of which may be their religious beliefs and practices. Furthermore, religious language is often used as a mask by political leaders and perpetrators of violence that hides other motivating factors that may be less noble or persuasive to their cause.

Key questions that should be kept in mind as we explore these issues include: What are the warrants for making war and making peace in a given religious tradition? Are they at odds with each other or do they complement each other? Do they emanate historically from competing visions within the same religion? How do these varying traditions affect current practice and belief? What is the role of change and evolution in the religion’s practices and beliefs, and how does change occur? How would you attempt to disentangle multiple motivations for war or peace among religious people? Is religious motivation a mask for economic, ethnic, or psychological needs? Always? Sometimes? For political leaders but not for followers? What would you do in a given region of the world where religion played a major role in violence? Would you attempt to secularize the public, redirect the religious motivations, or repress the violent representatives of religion?

Would you attempt to employ a variety of conflict resolution strategies? If so, which ones, problem-solving workshops, mediation strategies, or psychodynamic approaches to interpersonal reconciliation? What is religious violence? Is it a more authentic or less authentic expression of a religion? How do you go about answering this question, by taking a poll of coreligionists, studying the primary sources of that tradition, or imposing a value that you and many others are convinced is universal, e.g., that killing of innocents by terror, for whatever reason, cannot be sanctioned by decent religion? Can you know what a religion has truly meant to its adherents if you only speak to or study male representatives of that faith? Is self-described religious peace making that advocates for and relates to one side only to be considered peacemaking or conflict resolution, or is it something else? These are but a fraction of the questions that are raised by our subject matter. Some questions will be addressed in class. Other questions I would like you to ponder as you prepare innovative research.

2

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Holy War, Holy Peace: How Religion Can Bring Peace to the Middle East
Author: Gopin, Marc  
Publisher: Oxford University Press, Incorporated  
ISBN or UPC: 0-19-514650-6(Active Record)
Format: Trade Cloth  
Date: Apr 2002

Between Eden and Armageddon
Author: Gopin, Marc  
Publisher: Oxford University Press, Incorporated  
ISBN or UPC: 0-19-513432-X(Active Record)
Format: Trade Cloth  
Date: Jul 2000, or paper version (cheaper)

Ambivalence of the Sacred
Author: Appleby, R Scott  
Publisher: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Incorporated  
ISBN or UPC: 0-8476-8555-1(Active Record)
Format: Trade Paper  
Date: Nov 1999

Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik
Editor: Johnston, Douglas  
Publisher: Oxford University Press  
ISBN: 0-19-516089-4  
Date: 2003

Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding
Contributor: David Smock (Editor)  
Publication Date: June 2002  
Publisher: United States Institute of Peace Press (USIP Press)
HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR BACKGROUND ON RELIGIONS:
Henry Thompson, World Religions in War and Peace (Jefferson, NC: Mcfarland, 1988). [This is out of print. See what you can find and share.]

REQUIRED EXCERPTS FROM BOOKS OR ARTICLES:
THEORY (packet available in ICAR library and GMU E-Reserves)

3

REQUIREMENTS:
Midterm(30%)
Final Exam(60%)
Participation and Preparation(10%)
Class participation will depend upon familiarity with the readings.

ASSIGNMENTS:
(each number represents one week)
(assignments listed according to the author of the selection)

I. THEORY
1. Religion and Conflict Resolution: Mapping a New Field
Gopin, Eden, 3-86, 199-228
Appleby, 1-56
Johnston, Faith-Based, 231-258

2. The Psychological and Social Foundations of Conflict
Montville, all
Volkan, all
Sandole, all

3. Hermeneutics, Religion and the Psycho-Social Dynamics of Religious Conflict and Violence
Gadamer, all
Mitchell, all
Stenger, all
Appleby, 57-120
II. APPLICATIONS

   Queen and King, 1-44, 121-146, 147-236
   Johnston, Faith-Based, 76-90

5. Buddhist Liberation Movements: Vietnam, Tibet, Conclusions
   Queen and King, 321-436

6. Christian Peacemaking: Introduction, France/Germany, East Germany
   Appleby, 121-308
   Gopin, Eden, 139-166
   Johnston, Religion, 37-63, 119-152

7. Christian Peacemaking: Bosnia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Philippines
   Johnston, Religion, 64-118, 177-257, 153-176
   Johnston, Faith-Based 124-177

8. The Arab/Israeli Conflict: Religious/Secular and Inter-Monotheistic Conflict
   Gopin, Eden, 115-138
   Gopin, Holy War, 3-102
   Johnston, Faith-Based, 91-123

9. The Arab/Israeli Conflict: Abrahamic Pathways Toward Relationship Transformation
   Gopin, Holy War, 103-143, 160-228
   Gopin, Eden, 167-198

10. Kashmir: Hindu and Islamic Possibilities
    Johnston: 33-75

11. Islam and Peacemaking from a Sunni Normative Perspective: Applications to Sudan
    Johnston, Faith-Based, 178-230

12. The Question of Interfaith Dialogue
    Smock, all
    Gopin, Holy War, 144-159