Instructor: Anna Sheftel  
Time: Wednesdays 9:00am - 12:00pm  
Room: TBA  
Office: GIG 325  
Office hours: Tuesdays 12:15pm - 1:15pm or by appointment.  
Note: No office hours on September 25 or October 23.  
Telephone number: (613)236-1393, ext. 2249  
Email address: asheftel@ustpaul.ca  

In this course, we will examine the various kinds of conflicts that arise in local communities, and ask how these communities find effective, creative and ethical ways to respond to them. Our interest will be in both community-based problems and solutions, in order to better understand what conflict scholars and practitioners can learn from grassroots and bottom-up approaches to conflict. We will balance theoretical approaches to understanding different issues in community-based conflicts, as well as case studies to help us think through how the issues we are discussing manifest themselves in specific circumstances.

Learning Objectives and Approach:

The goal of this course is to provide an overview of ways local communities experience and respond to conflicts. We will blend theoretical and practical approaches to the topic, and we will critically engage with the literature as well as examine its normative potential. The course will be divided in three parts: in weeks 1-4, we will establish the framework through which we are exploring the task at hand, exploring concepts such as that of “community” and how conflicts arise within them. In weeks 5-9, we will study community conflicts thematically, comparing and contrasting the dynamics of different kinds of conflict and the possible ways of managing them; and in weeks 10-12, we will push our understandings of the responses we have already explored further by taking particular ways of responding to conflict and examining them in depth.

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

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of both the themes examined in the course as well as the case studies used to explore them;
- Display sensitivity regarding the ethical and political quandaries that emerge out of this topic;
- Feel confident approaching a situation of community conflict and successfully being able to understand its root causes, actors, dynamics and responses;
- Be capable of analyzing the perspectives and work of other scholars and practitioners on the course topic thoroughly and critically;
- Present coherent, articulate and thoughtful oral and written arguments regarding the course topic.

This course will be run primarily in a collaborative seminar-style format, with some lecturing. We will learn by grappling with the topics that we are exploring together. For this reason it is crucial that all students do the required readings and come to class prepared. Because we will be exploring the topic from multiple angles, we will be doing a lot of reading, which will be integral to the learning process. Expect to read around 100 pages per week.
In addition to reading, we will be doing a lot of writing; this is the best way to learn to put what we are learning into practice, and to communicate our ideas to our scholarly community. You will be guided through your writing assignments, and you are encouraged to approach me, or the academic writing help centre, for any assistance regarding your tasks. The goal of your assignments is to facilitate your learning and your training as a scholar, not to trip you up. Please do not be shy to ask for help.

**Required Readings**

For this course, we will be reading a selection of book chapters and essays. These readings can be found in the course pack, available for purchase at Rytec Printers, 404 Dalhousie Street, Tel: (613) 241-2679. In this syllabus, any readings that are found in the course reader are marked with the abbreviation (CR).

We will also be using a number of articles that are available on the course website (Blackboard Vista) on Virtual Campus, and are also compulsory. These readings are marked below with the abbreviation (BBV).

**Important dates**

- **Wednesday, September 5, 2012**: First class.
- **Wednesday, September 26, 2012**: Class cancelled.
- **Wednesday, October 10, 2012**: Term paper proposals due.
- **Thursday, November 22, 2012**: Rough draft of term paper due.
- **Wednesday, November 28, 2012**: Last class and term paper workshop.
- **Monday, December 10, 2012**: Final paper due.

**Course Schedule**

*Conceptualizing community conflict*

**Class 1: Wednesday, September 5, 2012**

*Introduction to the Course*

**Class 2: Wednesday, September 12, 2012**

*Defining our terms*

*What is "local"? What is "community"? And what is "conflict"?*

**Required Readings:**


**Class 3: Wednesday, September 19, 2012**

*The Ethics of Community Conflict Intervention*

*What are the ethical boundaries for community management of conflicts? We will used debates around harm reduction as an example.*

**Required Readings:**


Class 4: Wednesday, September 26, 2012
Class cancelled.

**How do Communities Respond to...?**

Class 5: Wednesday, October 3, 2012

**Environmental Conflicts**

*How do local communities organize around environmental conflicts? How can power asymmetries between communities and private actors be resolved? How do aboriginal communities, in particular, approach these conflicts?*

**Required Readings:**


2. George Hoberg, Andrea Rivers & Geoff Salomons. (2012) "Comparative Pipeline Politics: Oil Sands Pipeline Controversies in Canada and the United States." Conference Paper. (BBV);


Class 6: Wednesday, October 10, 2012

**Socio-Economic Conflicts**

*How do communities organize around conflicts related to their economic status and position? We will use conflicts over gentrification and sex work as examples.*

**Term Paper Proposals Proposals due.**

**Required Readings:**


Class 7: Wednesday, October 17, 2012

**Ethnic and Religious Conflicts**

*Ethnic and religious conflicts are often understood as large-scale problems, bigger than the implicated communities themselves. Using the example of Bosnia-Herzegovina, we will ask how local communities grapple with, and respond to, these tensions.*

**Required Readings:**


Note: There will be no class on Wednesday, October 24th, due to the study break.

Class 8: Wednesday, October 31, 2012
Immigration and Integration Conflicts
How do both host and immigrant communities grapple with conflicts around immigration, integration and multiculturalism?
Required Readings:

Class 9: Wednesday, November 7, 2012
Memory and Identity-Based Conflicts
How do issues surrounding identity and memory of violence affect situations of local conflict? What strategies do communities use to overcome them? We will examine the cases of Palestine, Argentina and Northern Ireland.
Required Readings:
1. Ahmad H. Sa’di. (2002) “Catastrophe, Memory and Identity: Al-Nakbah as a Component of Palestinian Identity.” Israel Studies 7(2). (BBV);
2. Fernando Bosco. (2004) “Human rights politics and scaled performances of memory: conflicts among the Madres de Plaza de Mayo in Argentina.” Social & Cultural Geography 5(3) (BBV);

Local Conflict Resolution Possibilities

Class 10: Wednesday, November 14, 2012
Dialogue and Mediation
What are the possibilities and challenges of community-based dialogue and mediation work? What are the necessary conditions for such initiatives to be successful?
Required Readings:

Class 11: Wednesday, November 21, 2012
Protest, Activism and Speaking Truth to Power
How do protest movements decide their tactics, develop communities and evolve? What are the possibilities of protest?
Project Presentations.
Required Readings:

Class 12: Wednesday, November 28, 2012
Creative Means of Resistance and Communication

*How can creativity and the arts create change in conflicted communities? We will examine intervention methods such as museums, translation and performance.*

**Term paper workshop day.**

**Required Readings:**

**Assignments and Evaluation**

**Class Blog: 35%**

A major part of your coursework and evaluation will consist of participating in the class blog, which you will find at http://communityresponsestoconflict.wordpress.com. On the first day of class, I will collect your email addresses and give you each a log-in to the blog, so that you can post yourself. Your blogging grade is broken down into two parts:

**Writing Posts: 24%**

You are expected to post a minimum of 8 blog posts relating to the course topic. In terms of subject matter:

- At least 5 of your posts must be your thoughts on the week's readings;
- At least 2 of them must be your reactions to timely news items or media source that you have found that relate to the course topic.

The hope is that through your own writing, as well as reading that of your classmates', you will be able to process and analyze course topics and form your own opinions on them before even setting foot in class, thus forming a productive starting point for how we use our class time. Posts should be between 500-700 words each. The reading-related posts must be up on the blog by 5pm on the day before class (i.e. Tuesday afternoon). Otherwise they will not count towards your grade. Your news-related posts may go up at any time you'd like during the semester, however you must have all your posts up by the end of the last class.

Blogging is a less formal medium than essay-writing, and we will discuss the expectations for blog posts in class. In general, even if you are somewhat more casual in your writing, you still must use correct grammar, spelling, capitalization, full sentences and paragraphs. Your posts should reflect your opinions on the material you are grappling with, whether that material consists of course readings, news items, or both. You must, however, explain and substantiate your opinions. For example, it is not enough to say, "I thought the author of this article was wrong", but rather you should tell me "I thought the author of this article was wrong, because I don't think that tactic was implementable in this particular context, and let me tell you why." Please do feel free to link to other sources online that...
back up your points or have informed your opinion. When referencing any texts, you do not need to fully cite them, but you must still tell us the author, publication and page number you are referring to.

Each blog post will account for 3% of your grade, for a total of 24%. You will get 1/3 just for writing something, 2/3 if you write something competent that is generally grammatical, comprehensible, and generally meets the requirements of the assignment, and 3/3 if your post is not only competent, but also thoughtful and insightful. If you write more than eight posts, and you are certainly welcome to do so, I will count the top 8 of them towards your final grade.

**Commenting: 11%**

Blogs are nothing without comments. In addition to posting your own thoughts on the course readings and on what you are consuming in terms of news and related media, you are expected to engage with your classmates’ writing. You must comment at least 11 times over the course of the semester; each comment is worth 1% of your grade. You must leave at least 5 of these comments before the beginning of the reading week, and at least 5 must come after the beginning of the reading week and before the last day of classes.

In order to get your “point” for your comment, it must be a meaningful response to the post you have chosen, and cannot just consist of “great post!” or “I agree with you!” or anything of that kind. You can ask the poster a question, you can build on one of their ideas, you can respectfully disagree with a point they've made, etc. We will talk about what makes a good comment in class. You are encouraged to respond to the comments that people make on your own posts, but these responses cannot count for more than 5 of your 11 graded comments. (Of course, you are encouraged to comment far more than 11 times!)

I will give you written feedback and your accumulated grades 3 times during the course of the semester: in week 5, week 8, and when you hand in your final paper.

**Presentation of Readings: 15%**

This assignment will be done in groups of 2-3 students. Each class will begin with two students presenting that week’s readings. You will sign up for your week during our first class. Presentations should be a maximum of 15 minutes long, and you are expected to:

- briefly summarize the readings;
- highlight the key issues that they raised;
- comment on the significance of the topic, and whether you agreed or disagreed with the way it was presented, and why;
- discuss and demonstrate the key issues brought up in the readings with reference to at least one case study, taken from the readings or chosen by you.

After their presentation, each team will be responsible for facilitating a group discussion. You will be expected to have read your fellow students’ blog posts from the week, and you should begin the discussion portion of the class by commenting on what common themes/interesting points emerged out of them, and using that as a starting off point for the discussion. You will be graded on: how clearly you present your ideas; your ability to synthesize the material; the depth of your engagement with the readings; your facilitation of the discussion.

**Research Paper: 50%**

In addition to many small pieces of writing, you will be expected to develop your own research project on the subject of your own choosing throughout the course of the semester. You should immediately
start looking around at contemporary or historical cases of local conflicts that you find interesting, and which would make worthy topics for research and writing.

Your assignments for this project will consist of:

Proposal and bibliography: 15%
The first step in planning your project will be writing up a short (500-750 words) proposal that states your given topic and how you intend to explore it. This proposal should include your research question; elaboration on how you intend to approach the topic; and why your topic is worthwhile (the “so what?” question). Attached to your proposal you should include a bibliography of at least 5 peer-reviewed sources which you intend to use for your research. Please take care writing this proposal, as it will be invaluable in allowing me to give you feedback that will help guide you as you pursue your project.

Your proposal is due: Wednesday, October 10, 2012 (in class)
It will be returned to you the next week when we meet for individualized appointments to discuss your project.

Rough Draft and Peer Workshop: 10%
The goal of this assignment is not only to explore a particular topic in depth, but also to strengthen your paper writing skills. As a way of helping you through this process, you will have to turn in a complete rough draft of your term paper a week before the end of the semester, so that I can give you feedback, and so that your peers can workshop it with you in the last class. Your grade for this portion of the assignment breaks down into:

- 5%: Submitting the rough draft electronically, which is due: Thursday November 22, at 5pm. If you submit a complete draft (meaning that it is fully written, well-formatted, includes all your references and bibliography, and needs only editing and revisions), you will get the full 5% of this grade.
- 5%: Participating in the workshop on the last day of class (November 28). You will be workshopping in teams of 4, which means that you will be responsible for reading and critiquing three of your classmates’ papers. In order to get the full 5%, you will need both to participate in the workshopping during class time, and to submit typed comments of at least half a single-spaced page to each student in your group (with a duplicate copy for me). This is a great opportunity to learn how to critique other people's work, and to learn how to respond to critiques, so it is in your interest to really engage with the process.

Final Paper 30%
Your final paper should be between 2500-3000 words. Your final draft must incorporate the feedback you received during the critique of your rough draft. You are expected to make a clearly formulated argument about the topic you have chosen in your introduction, and then spend the body of your paper elaborating on that argument with examples that you thoughtfully analyse. You must use at least 6 academic sources in your paper. You must use formal citations in your essays; I recommend Harvard style, which you can find in the University of Ottawa Writing and Style Guide here: http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/eng/documents/WritingandStyleGuide2010-2011_001.pdf

This essay will be graded with equal weight on:

- how clearly you write and express your ideas; and
- on the strength of your argument and your analysis of your given topic.

We will be discussing the expectations for this paper in more depth in class.

Your final paper is due: Monday, December 10th, by 3pm.
(Hand it in to me in person in my office between 1:00pm and 3:00pm, or if you would like to submit it
beforehand, slip it under my office door.)

Course Rules

Assignments:
All written assignments must be submitted typed and double-spaced. They must be submitted in hard copy; unless otherwise noted, email assignments will not be accepted. Assignments must be handed during class time on the day that they are due unless indicated otherwise. If you miss the class in which an assignment is due, you should slip it under my office door; in order for it not to be considered late, it must be there by the end of class time on the day it is due. You are expected to back up all of your work; digital malfunctions will not be an excuse for failing to turn in work except in the most extreme circumstances. Late assignments will be penalized accordingly:
- -5% of the total grade for an assignment up to 24 hours late;
- -10% of the total grade for an assignment between 24 hours and 72 hours late (excluding weekends);
- -20% of the total grade for an assignment between 72 hours and a week late.
Assignments will not be accepted more than a week late. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, and you must ask my permission for an extension at least 48 hours before the due-date for an assignment, unless you have a medical emergency, in which case you will require a doctor’s note.

Asking for help:
You are encouraged to approach me for help with anything related to the course. It is my pleasure to help you out, so please do not be shy. If you are unsure of what is expected of you for a given task, it is your responsibility to get in touch with me and ask me. It is very tricky to do some of these tasks for the first time, and I am there to help guide you through them. You are welcome to come speak to me during my office hours, or to set up an appointment at another time. You are also welcome to email me, although please note that you should not expect instant replies to your emails at all hours; I check my university email account during business hours, Monday-Friday, and will usually reply to you within a business day. For this reason, try not to leave your questions to the last minute.

Respect:
It is expected that all students will be open to and respectful of other students’ views. Conflict Studies courses can touch on sensitive issues of religion, politics, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and nationality, among others. Discussions should be kept relevant to the course material and issues at hand; they should not include personally directed comments or attacks, use of negative stereotypes, or broad generalizations about groups of people. Inappropriate use or display of language, including but not limited to name-calling, racial/ethnic/sexual/religious comments, visual images, and offensive use of slang will not be tolerated. Please see me privately if you are feeling uncomfortable for any reason in class.

Academic Integrity:
Any person found guilty of academic fraud will be subject to severe sanctions. Some examples of academic fraud include:
- plagiarism or cheating of any kind;
• submitting work of which the student is not the author, in whole or in part (except for duly cited quotations or references);
• presenting research data that has been falsified or concocted in any way; and
• submitting, without written prior approval from the professors concerned, the same work for more than one course.

If you require further information, please consult the Saint Paul University and University of Ottawa websites, particularly the following links:
http://www.ustpaul.ca/HumanSciences/academicRegulations_graduate_e.asp#Fraud
http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/regist/fraud_e.html
http://www.uottawa.ca/plagiarism.pdf

In this class, I will have a strict “2 strikes” policy regarding plagiarism and other forms of cheating. If you are caught once, you will receive an automatic grade of "0" on your assignment (which may or may not cause you to fail the course). If you are caught a second time, you will receive an automatic grade of "0" in the course. There will be no re-writes or concessions in these cases, and you are expected to have full knowledge of what constitutes plagiarism and cheating by making use of the above resources.

**Other:**
You must keep cell phones and all other electronic devices on silent during class. You are expected to abstain from other disruptive behaviour, such as interrupting your peers, eating loudly, making a lot of noise if you arrive late or leave early, etc. Please use your common sense and be respectful of your peers.
## Grading Scheme

You will be graded according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
<th>Explanation of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90 - 100%</td>
<td>Exceptional and superior work, both in the content and the execution of the assignment. You are thinking deeply about the issues you are discussing, and you are able to communicate them flawlessly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85 - 89%</td>
<td>Both content and execution of the assignment were thoughtfully and very competently done. You have done an excellent job of meeting the requirements of the assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80 - 84%</td>
<td>Much of the assignment is excellent and worthy of an A, but there are some minor issues (e.g. your writing style is repetitive or you made a small factual error) either in content or execution, that are holding you back slightly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>75 - 79%</td>
<td>While most of the work was very well done, at least one aspect of it fell short in some noteworthy way (e.g. you did not properly state your argument in your introduction, or you neglected an important angle in your analysis).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>70 - 74%</td>
<td>The assignment was competently done and met course requirements, both in content and in execution. Whatever problems the assignment may have had, they did not detract in too serious of a way from the positives of the work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65 - 69%</td>
<td>The assignment was in some places competently done, but there were serious problems (e.g. your writing was disorganized and difficult to follow, or you treated your topic with insufficient depth) with either the content or execution that detracted from your overall work significantly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60 - 65%</td>
<td>Both the content and the execution of the assignment have significant problems (e.g. your writing was ungrammatical and difficult to understand and you provided almost no examples to back up your argument), such that the work did not adequately meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>55 - 59%</td>
<td>Your work was inadequate in both content and execution (e.g. your paper had no argument at all and was written without paragraphs). You did not pay attention to the assignment instructions and failed to meet the course requirements in significant ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50 - 54%</td>
<td>Your work was so far beyond the minimum requirements for the assignment (e.g. you only cite wikipedia and your topic is completely inappropriate for the assignment and course) that it suggests you have not been properly pursuing your coursework and have not put a reasonable amount of work into it at all. There is nothing in your assignment that speaks to your having given serious thought to the course subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>40 - 49%</td>
<td>Your work was so far beyond the minimum requirements for the assignment (e.g. you only cite wikipedia and your topic is completely inappropriate for the assignment and course) that it suggests you have not been properly pursuing your coursework and have not put a reasonable amount of work into it at all. There is nothing in your assignment that speaks to your having given serious thought to the course subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 - 39%</td>
<td>Your work was so far beyond the minimum requirements for the assignment (e.g. you only cite wikipedia and your topic is completely inappropriate for the assignment and course) that it suggests you have not been properly pursuing your coursework and have not put a reasonable amount of work into it at all. There is nothing in your assignment that speaks to your having given serious thought to the course subject.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>