

Images of Conflict and Peace: Seminar in Conflict Resolution

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Course Description

:

This syllabus is meant only to serve as a general road-map for our seminar. As you will see it gets decreasingly specific as the semester goes on. The route of our seminar will change as we go along, with detours, side-trips and some flat tires. The overall success of our journey - from home to home - will be primarily determined by virtue of individual and group energy, vision and participation.

In short, this seminar will be highly participatory and interactive. All students should be thoroughly prepared for each class. Preparation will include completing assigned readings and writing analytical journal entries (see below) about these readings, the seminar and other issues related to it before class. There will also be extra reading and/or writing assignments that students will be asked to prepare before certain sessions. For many class sessions a different student, or several students, will be asked to prepare a short critical/analytical presentation about the assigned readings. This does not mean a summary of readings. It means critically articulating the main points of each reading and analyzing its relevance and/or shortcomings.

Analytic Journal:

One central didactic tool of this seminar is the analytical journal. Each student will write one individually, we will also create a single group journal drawn. The former will consist of a running commentary by each student about seminar readings and sessions, as well as personal reflexive thoughts on the meaning of the course within the context of students' academic background and interests, personalities, experiences and professional aspirations.

Each student should buy a loose-leaf notebook and paper. Students should divide it into four sections.

The first should be labeled: "READINGS." Students are expected to analyze at least one assigned reading before class. These analyses should consist of critical reflections on the relevance/value of a given reading.

The second section should be labeled: "SEMINAR SESSIONS." These entries are to be made after each session, prior to the next session. They will consist of a critical analysis of the class, the materials covered, the discussions held and points made that merit further reflection.

Section three should be labeled: "REFLEXIVITY." Reflexivity in the social sciences is based upon assumptions that the life experiences and perspectives of students/observers greatly influences the way that the "object" being studied or observed is comprehended. Moreover, in the act of studying something the "subject" doing the study or observation and the "object" under consideration have mutual influence on each other. That is, by studying something, both "subject" and "object" become different than they were prior to the interaction. In this section, students will be asked to reflexively write about conflicts and interventions which they read about, observe, or participate in.

Part four should be labeled "SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS." In this section you will write special

entries as assigned by professor.

This journal should be viewed as a serious academic writing assignment and didactic tool. Journals must ultimately be typed. However, students may keep their records by hand until they are due at mid-term and end of semester. At least two times during the semester, once prior to and once following the mission, students will meet with me to discuss their views and progress regarding the course and will be asked to turn in their journals (as they are) prior to these meetings. It will be the student's responsibility to keep up with assignments and entries.

Final:

In addition to the analytic journal, students will be expected to turn in a final and significant research paper (or some other medium in lieu of a formal research paper as agreed upon with professor) which will present the students' group research project.

Seminar: Pre-Trip

Week One: Reflexivity and Research

Readings :

Morgan, Gareth and Rafael Ramirez, "Action Learning: A Holographic Metaphor for Guiding Social Change," *Human Relations* , Vol. 37, #1, 1984 (pp. 1-27).

Steier, Frederick, "Reflexivity and Methodology: An Ecological Constructionism. " In Frederick Steier (ed.) (1992) *Research and Reflexivity*, Newbury Park, Ca.: Sage, pp 163-185.

Mendelsohn, Everett, (1989, revised edition) *A Compassionate Peace: A Future for Israel. Palestine and the Middle East*, New York: Noonday Press.

- a. Discuss Mendelsohn's book and presentation.
- b. Discuss and begin further refining and defining project ideas .
- c. Introduce and begin reflexive journal process – individual and group - and explore seminar methodology.

Weeks Two-Five: Preparation for Middle East Mission: background and research projects.

In addition to the following required readings, during this period, students should put together, in consultation with me, their own bibliography to guide their respective research projects.

Israeli and Palestinian Affairs/Background

(The following texts with * next to them are in the Haverford Bookstore for purchase)

Amos Elon, *The Israelis: Founders and Sons* (2nd Edition)*

Ann Lesch,(1992). Transition to Palestinian Self Government. Report of a Study Group of the Middle East Program Committee on

International Security Studies, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge, Ma. Published in cooperation with Indiana University Press, Bloomington.

Edward Said and Jean Mohr, (1986). *After the Last Sky: Palestinian Lives* , NY: Pantheon Books.*

William Spencer (ed.) (1992). *The Middle East* (fourth edition), Guildford Conn.: Dushkin Publishing Group.

Arab-Jewish relations in Israel

Michael Gorkin (1991). *Days of Honey. Days of Onion: The Story of a Palestinian Family in Israel* Boston: Beacon Press.*

David Shipler (1986). *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land*, New York: New York Times Books.*

Week Six: Overview of conflict resolution and the Middle East

a. Jay Rothman (1992) . *From Confrontation to Cooperation*

Newbury Park, Ca.: Sage Publications.*

b. Additional text TBA

Week seven: Possible Washington briefing trip:

David Shipler, Bill Quandt, Samuel Lewis, Chris Van Hollen and others TBA

Week Eight: Mission

Weeks Nine until End: Mission Debriefing, Project Work and Presentations