

Asian Institute of Technology
School of Environment, Resources and Development (SERD) and
School of Engineering and Technology (SET)
Disaster Preparedness, Mitigation and Management (DPMM)

IN84.31 Human Conflicts and Humanitarian Emergency Management 3(3-0) Semester: August

Course Objective:

The main objective of the course is to provide understanding and insights on the causes and nature of human conflicts induced due to emergencies ranging from war, terrorist attacks, refugee influx and health emergency.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course, the students will be able to:

- Explain the current debate on conflicts – their causes, possible solutions and ways to avoid future conflicts
- Analyse the policy options for targeting and working with the communities affected by conflicts
- Critically assess the policies and tools to avoid conflicts and return to normal life

Prerequisite: None

Course Outline:

I. Human Conflicts and Interventions

1. Conflicts: A historical perspective
2. Conflicts today: Their nature and characteristics (ethnic, religious, political, etc.)
3. Factors leading to conflicts: Arms trade, governance, corruption, crime, etc.

II. The war on Terror

1. The World of Fear: Its nature and consequences
2. The political background and geopolitical issues
3. The response to the threat
4. Preventing terrorism: Challenges and opportunities

III. International Humanitarian System and Assistance

1. Disaster and Emergencies
2. The growth of Humanitarian System: Global to national
3. The humanitarian Emergencies: Health

IV. Complex Political Emergencies

1. Definition and nature
2. The Victims: Refugees, IDPs etc.
3. Response to CPEs: The UN, states, NGOs and aid agencies
4. Humanitarian interventions: Politics and legality

V. The Future of Humanitarian Action

1. Building capacity: State, NGOs and media
2. Rebuilding post-conflict Societies: The Role of International Criminal Court, The UN
3. Preventing emergencies: Global, national to local efforts

Laboratory Session(s): None

Learning Resources:

Textbooks:

1. David Keen (2008). Complex Emergencies. Cambridge: Polity Press.
2. Randall Law (2009). Terrorism – A History. Cambridge: Polity Press.
3. Thoma G. Weiss (2012). Humanitarian Intervention. Cambridge: Polity.
4. Roger Mac Ginty and Andrew Williams (2009). Conflict and Development. London: Routledge.

Reference Books:

1. Harun ur Rashid (2013). An Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies. Dhaka: UPL.
2. Thomas G. Weiss (2013). Humanitarian Business. Cambridge: Polity.

Journals and Magazines:

1. World Development, Elsevier
2. Third World Quarterly, Taylor and Francis
3. Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Taylor and Francis
4. Global Governance, Lynne Rienner

Teaching and Learning Methods:

The teaching and learning methods followed in the course are: lectures, discussions, review of recent publications which include journal articles. It also includes a group presentation.

Time Distribution and Study Load:

- Lectures: 45 hours
- Self-study: 135 hours
- Assignments: 10 hours

Evaluation Scheme:

Mid-semester exam: 30%

Assignments and Presentation: 30%

Final exam: 40%

Both Mid-semester and Final examinations will be closed book.

In the examination, an “A” would be awarded if a student can elaborate the knowledge learned in class by giving his/her own analysis on the issues discussed, from journals, books and other sources. A “B” would be awarded if a student has an overall understanding of all topics, a “C” would be given if a student meets below average expectation on both knowledge acquired and analysis. A “D” would be given if a student does not meet the basic expectations in understanding and analyzing the topics and issues presented in the course.

Instructor(s): Dr. Mokbul Morshed Ahmad