

POST-CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

CONF 695/385

Faculty: Dr. Marc Gopin

Dr. Marc Gopin
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Course Description

In the 1990s, Bosnia was the focal point of the most tragic war that Europe and the Balkans had seen since World War II. It was also the scene of major war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and acts of genocide that transfixed Europe and the world. At the same time, nothing is what it seems in racial and ethnic wars. Bosnia was also the scene of heroic gestures across enemy lines between peacebuilding Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox Christians, Muslims, and Jews. Countless lives were saved by individual heroes, and communities of care were established. This is a story of conflict management, peacebuilding, and reconciliation between extraordinarily heroic people. This combines with a tale of horror, and a stubborn persistence of managed ceasefire that has not led to positive change and reconciliation. In this course, students will study the tragedy of inter-ethnic and inter-religious war, the heroic efforts to do just the opposite, and the implications for global war and global peace. With Professor Marc Gopin students will travel to Sarajevo, Mostar, and Banja Luka, where they will be guided by major heroes of Bosnian inter-religious peacebuilding, meet extraordinary organizations, and interact with average people creatively engaged in positive change.

Course Topics

- Post-conflict reconstruction
- Conflict management in the midst of war
- Post-war reconciliation work
- Interfaith peacebuilding during and after war
- Justice and peace
- Trauma and healing
- Education for sustainable peace

Course Structure

Students will spend 8 days in Bosnia & Herzegovina. Each day will be structured as 3 hours class time, and the rest of the day and evening will be spent in field

experience, guided discussion, and other engagement. We will be studying as well as traveling in Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka, and other parts of the country. Preparatory and follow-up meetings will take place at GMU's campus in Arlington, VA. Students who do not live in the Washington, DC, area can attend the meeting virtually via WebEx.

Course Requirements

- A. Participation personally or virtually in one preparatory meeting prior to departure for Bosnia.
- B. Effective and successful engagement with others in Bosnia, both in the class and with all Bosnians that the class engages. **25% of Grade**
- C. Reading all or most of *Healing the Heart of Conflict* (2nd ed.) and *The Bridge Betrayed* prior to departure.
- D. Reading all of the other required readings listed below before papers are written.
- E. Two 5-page journals that describe your experience of the intervention and trip, and analytically reflect on class readings, discussion, interviews, and day-to-day experiences. Write about how the experience relates to your own ideas and your own way of thinking about and understanding the world. How has your perspective changed? You should also include any critiques of the material presented to you, along with your reasoning behind your critiques. **The journals should have a personal as well as an academic element to them.** One journal should reflect on your time in Bosnia and the other should contain your thoughts and reflections after you return home.. **Each journal: 15% of grade.**
- F. A final paper (minimum 20 pages for grad students, minimum 15 pages for undergraduates, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 1" margin). Course participants will choose their own topics, drawing upon the readings for the course, as well as outside sources as relevant. The first half of the paper should comprise research on a topic of your choice relevant to the region and conflict. The second half of the paper should explore and consider next steps or recommendations with regard to peacebuilding or conflict engagement work that could be done to address your topic. **45% of Grade**
 - a. A required paragraph summary/paper outline must be submitted to Dr. Gopin two weeks before the final paper deadline. This paragraph can be brief, but **it must contain your research question** in question — not statement — form. A bulleted outline is also acceptable for this requirement *as long as it contains your research question.*

- G. Participation personally or virtually in one follow-up meeting, post-trip, to prepare for papers and evaluate the experience.
- H. **Submitting assignments:** For all assignments listed above, submissions should be made to Dr. Gopin via email at mgopin@gmu.edu. Students must submit from their university email address, and **not** from a personal or work email account. Failure to submit assignments according to these guidelines can result in late grades, which might impact your graduation status or financial aid. **No exceptions.**
- I. **Early grading:** If you need your final grade to be submitted earlier than Mason's semester grading deadline, you *must* notify Dr. Gopin via email no later than one week after the trip ends. All assignments must be submitted no less than two weeks in advance of when the early grade is due to your institution. Late requests for early grades and/or submission of papers later than two weeks before the requested due date are not guaranteed to be graded in time. **No exceptions.**

The total classroom time for this course will be approximately 45 hours. This is based on one 3-hour preparatory class before travel, eight 3-hour class sessions while in Bosnia, as well as hearing from multiple guest speakers in the region, and one 3-hour classroom session a few months after returning home from the course.

Reading Materials

Required Text for Purchase

Gopin, M. (2016). *Healing the heart of conflict: Eight crucial steps to making peace with yourself and with others, revised and updated*. North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace.

Sells, M. (1998). *The bridge betrayed: Religion and genocide in Bosnia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Required Readings

Mitchell, C.R. "Psychological Dimensions of Conflict," in idem, *The Structure of International Conflict*. St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1981, pp. 71-98.

Montville, Joseph V. "Psychoanalytic Enlightenment and the Greening of Diplomacy" in Volkan, Vamik D., Montville, Joseph V., Julius, Demetrios A., *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships*. Lexington: Lexington Books, 1991. vol. II, pp. 177-192.

Spahic Siljak, Zilka. "Women, Religion, and Peace Leadership in Bosnia and Herzegovina." EWI Fellowship Programme. 2014. <http://www.eiz.hr/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Zilka-Spahic-Siljak-ENG.pdf>

Volkan, Vamik. "Psychological Processes in Unofficial Diplomacy Meetings" in Volkan, Vamik D., Montville, Joseph V., Julius, Demetrios A., *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships*. Lexington: Lexington Books, 1991. vol. II, pp. 207-222.

Ch. 2 "Between Religion and Conflict Resolution: Mapping a New Field of Study," pages 13 - 32 in *Between Eden and Armageddon* (citation below).

Ch. 5 "The Camouflaged Role of Religion in the War in B&H," pages 74 - 98 in *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, Paul Mojzes, ed. (1998). Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.

Ch. 4 "'Would You Shoot Me, You Idiot?': Friar Ivo Markovic, Bosnia and Herzegovina," pages 97 - 122 in *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*, David Little, ed. (2007). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Excerpt on Father Ivo from *Peacemakers in Action* vol. 2.

Recommended Text

Gopin, M. (2002). *Between Eden and Armageddon: The future of world religions, violence, and peacemaking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mojzes, P., ed. (1998). *Religion and the War in Bosnia*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.

Honor Code and Plagiarism

A reminder: Plagiarism or other violations of the **honor code** are not acceptable in this or any other GMU class. In addition to the following, please see the S-CAR handbook:

http://www.gmu.edu/departments/ICAR/newstudent/Appendix_L.pdf.)

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. You can find a copy of the Honor Code at: academicintegrity.gmu.edu. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review. With specific regards to plagiarism, three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be

acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor.

S-CAR's Policy: Faculty require that all written work must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared to electronic databases. Faculty may at any time compare a student's written work against electronic databases/plagiarism detection software without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require work to be submitted in print and electronic form. Faculty are encouraged to require students to submit work through Blackboard's SafeAssign program. Faculty may also directly submit work using the same system.

University Resources and Assistance

English Language Institute

The English Language Institute offers free English language tutoring to non-native English speaking students who are referred by a member of the GMU faculty or staff. For more information contact 703-993-3642 or malle2@gmu.edu.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center provides tutors who can help you develop ideas and revise papers at no charge. It can sometimes accommodate walk-ins, but generally it is best to call for an appointment. The services of the Writing Center are also available online.

Location: ARL311 **Contact:** 703-993-4491 or <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>. It is a free writing resource that offers individual, group, and online tutoring.

Disability Resource Center

The Disability Resource Center assists students with learning or physical conditions affecting learning. Students with learning differences that require special conditions for exams or other writing assignments should provide documentation provided by the Disability Resource Center. Please see one of the instructors the first week of classes.

Location: SUB I, Room 222 **Contact:** 703-993-2474 www.gmu.edu/student/drc/