

The 2014 Symposium on the State of Graduate Education in Peace and Conflict Resolution



May 19th & 20th, School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution,
George Mason University, Washington D.C.¹

¹ This report was prepared by Jared Pentz and Ronald Fisher based on the media from the symposium presentations and graphic art with assistance and all photos from Cassie Ammen. The presenters have reviewed their portion of the report; however, the authors take sole responsibility for the reported content.

Introduction and Summary

This day and a half symposium brought together faculty, staff and administrators of graduate programs in peace studies and conflict resolution to discuss the challenges and opportunities that programs face in responding to an evolving field and a rapidly changing world, with the goal of assisting them in successfully educating the next generation of professionals. Participants and speakers were invited from over thirty Master's level programs from across the country, which emphasize a focus on ethnopolitical conflict and its resolution. The first half day engaged Program Directors and designates in discussing program-level issues and responses, while the second day involved a broader audience from the peacebuilding community in discussing the interface between programs and the wider field. Overall, the agenda engaged a dozen speakers and over seventy participants in assessing the challenges and developing opportunities in order to provide our students with a well rounded education based on core competencies in peace and conflict resolution. Particular attention was directed toward enabling our students to launch a successful career in conflict resolution and peacebuilding by addressing the gap between our program offerings and the employment demands they will face. The importance and the opportunities for collaborative efforts among programs and partnerships with other organizations were also highlighted. The symposium was organized through the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution in partnership with the Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP), and received additional support from the United States Institute of Peace.

The symposium was by invitation only in order to keep the number of participants manageable and to focus on the constituencies that were most relevant: MA programs in peace and conflict resolution, the peace and conflict studies community, and the membership of the AfP. Therefore, an invitation list of MA programs with an emphasis on ethnopolitical conflict was developed from several sources, including academic programs and centers on the membership list of the AfP. The processing of invitations resulted in over seventy participants registering for the second day, while a smaller number of students, faculty and others came for various parts of the agenda. Participants engaged in a multi-format agenda consisting of presentations and discussions, break out groups, panel presentations, a keynote address by Dr. George Lopez, Vice President of the USIP, and a gallery walk of the graphic illustration of the second day activities. Some of the various topics on the agenda were also supported by presentations of the results of a telephone survey of Program Directors conducted by the planning committee prior to the event in order to identify and provide information on different issues.

Most of the presentations and discussions were videotaped for later transcription, and powerpoint presentations were collected for supplementary description. Links throughout the report provide access to most of the videos. Based on this information, this final report was produced in Spring 2015 in order to document the symposium and to serve as preparation for a subsequent similar event planned for May 11 and 12, 2015. The report will be provided to all invitees to the symposium and will also be made available to the members of the AfP Affinity Group for Education and Training, as this will provide helpful information to the group as it works to support the education and training of professionals in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

Symposium Planning Committee:

Ron Fisher, American University, Chair
Cassie Ammen, George Mason University
Kevin Avruch, George Mason University
Jeff Helsing, United States Institute of Peace
Uday Joshi, American University, Symposium Coordinator
Emily Mallozzi, Alliance for Peacebuilding
Mara Schoeny, George Mason University
Necla Tschirgi, University of San Diego
Rachel Weathers, American University
Craig Zelizer, Georgetown University

2014 Symposium Agenda

Day One Afternoon: Program Directors and/or Designates

- 1:30 Registration and Gathering
2:00 Welcome: Kevin Avruch, *Dean, School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution
Henry Hart Rice Professor of Conflict Resolution and Professor of Anthropology*
2:15 Overview of the Session and the Symposium: Ron Fisher, *Professor
International Peace and Conflict Resolution Program, American University
Distinguished Visiting Scholar, S-CAR, George Mason University*

Theme: How our programs are responding to an evolving field and a rapidly changing world?

- 2:30 Kevin Avruch: Responding to an Evolving Field
2:50 Necla Tschirgi: Meeting the Challenges of Peacebuilding 2.0
Professor of Practice in Human Security and Peacebuilding, Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies, University of San Diego
3:10 Input from the Pre-Symposium Interviews
3:25 Break and Formation of Break Out Groups
3:40 Break Out Groups: Address the theme and 3 Questions:
1) What are the most important and relevant changes in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in relation to our programs?
2) What developments in programming are called for in responses to these changes in the field and in the world?
3) What specific developments have your programs undertaken in the last ten years to meet administrative and resource challenges and to provide new learning opportunities for your students?
4:30 Reports and Discussion (key points on white board)
5:00 End of session and to Dinner in affinity groups at ethnic restaurants.

Day Two: Program Directors plus the wider peacebuilding community

Morning: Assessing Challenges and Developing Opportunities

- 8:45 Registration and Breakfast
9:15: Welcome: Kevin Avruch
9:25 Overview of Symposium: Ron Fisher

Challenge One: Adapting our programs to an evolving field and a changing world

- 9:35 Synthesis of Day One: Tatsushi Arai, *Associate Professor of Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation, School for International Training Graduate Institute*
10:00 Break Out Groups: Volunteer facilitators and reporters
Produce one or two primary answers to two questions from Day One:
1. What are the most important changes in conflict resolution and peacebuilding?
2. What developments in programming are called for in responses to the changes?
Record primary answers on flip chart and additional ones on sticky notes
10:45 Gallery Walk: Participants move around to see reports on flip charts

- 11:00 Break
- 11:15 Keynote Address: George Lopez: Conflict Resolution at the Crossroads: Where Else to Be?
*Vice President, Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding,
United States Institute of Peace*
- 12:00 Lunch with table discussions and networking (option to continue break out discussions)

Afternoon: Assessing Challenges and Developing Opportunities

Challenge Two: Providing our students with a well rounded education in PCR

- 1:00 Craig Zelizer: Core training components in our programs?
*Associate Director, Conflict Resolution Program, Department of Government,
Georgetown University*
- 1:15 Mara Schoeny: Core competencies or different perspectives on which our programs are based?
*Director of Certificate Programs, School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution,
George Mason University*
- 1:30 Open discussion with speakers' responses

Challenge Three: Enabling our students to launch a career in conflict resolution and peacebuilding

- 2:00 Input from pre-symposium survey interviews: Major competencies, perceptions of employers' desired competencies
- 2:15 Panel: The education-employment gap
Chair: Craig Zelizer
Panelists: Sandra Melone, *Search for Common Ground*
Maria Stephan, *US Institute of Peace, recently with CSO at the State Department*
- 3:30 Break

Challenge Four: Moving forward as a field of collaborative programs

- 3:45 Input from pre-symposium interviews: Ways to improve programs, collaborations with other programs, partnerships with other organizations, including North-South
- 3:45 Jeff Helsing: Opportunities for collaborative education and development of the PCR profession in relation to an evolving field and changing world
Associate Vice President, Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding, US Institute of Peace
- 4:00 Open discussion
- 4:45 Wrap Up: A graphic illustration from the day's discussions
- 5:15 Closing Comments from Planning Committee Members and others
- 5:30 Reception with an arts presentation on PCR
- 6:30 End

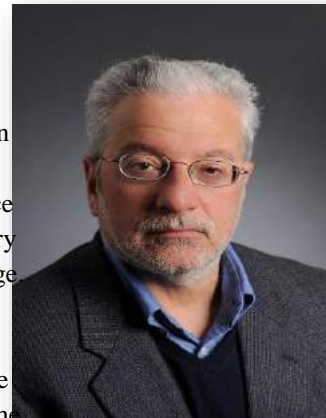
2014 Symposium: Day One

How our programs are responding to an evolving field and a rapidly changing world?

Speaker: Kevin Avruch

“Does Our Field Have a Centre? Thoughts from the Academy”²

Avruch, pictured on the right, uses his lengthy and distinguished career at George Mason University to analyze the development and pedagogy of peace and conflict studies. The article is a personal reflection on the development of the field of conflict resolution/peace and conflict studies from the perspective of the classroom: how what is thought necessary to teach has changed as the field has grown and reacted to often turbulent political change. From conflict regulation to management to resolution to transformation, and finally arriving at peacebuilding, each step of change in the nomenclature represents the evolution of understanding conflict and the relationship between conflicting parties. The field is continually trying to improve our understanding of conflict through analysis of the root causes of conflict and their potential remedies. Avruch realizes that peace and conflict studies does have a primordial center but it’s not a single point rather a conglomerate of propositions which hold the field together; for instance, dialogue, mediation, collaboration, dispute resolution systems design, problem solving workshops, and restorative justice.



Avruch follows the drivers of change in every phase of development within peace and conflict studies to highlight its emergence and expression in academia, especially with regards to current curriculum development. The field is growing and emerging quite quickly, as evidenced by new editions of textbooks eclipsing the scope of their predecessors by regularly incorporating new chapters and ideas. According to Avruch, there are two main sources for the rapid enlargement and interest in the peace and conflict studies. First is the end of the cold war, which changed power dynamics as the world shifted from a bi-polar playground to a chaotic multi-polar world with a resumption of many post-colonial conflicts. The second source is the rise of global terrorism beginning with the events of September 11th. Essentially this is when peacebuilding came to the forefront with the *Agenda for Peace* by Boutros Boutros-Ghali. After discussing the relationship between conflict resolution and peacebuilding, Avruch leaves the reader with seven criteria from the start of the field that are still applicable today. Seemingly, these fundamental concepts of the field are its primordial center. Everything in the field today is a byproduct of these concepts and new challenges are yet to be seen.

Speaker: Necla Tschirgi

“Meeting the Challenges of Peacebuilding 2.0”³

Necla Tschirgi was a member of the Peacebuilding Mapping Project (PMP) of the Alliance for Peacebuilding, which investigated the value and impact of peacebuilding work and set goals for the future of professional peacebuilding. The project report, "Peacebuilding 2.0: Mapping the Boundaries of an Expanding Field", presented the results of two surveys conducted of 119 US-based peacebuilding and related non-governmental organizations. The surveys found that peacebuilding and conflict resolution work spans a diverse set of sectors and actors with their unique areas of specialization, skills and competencies. Moreover, many of the NGOs surveyed work simultaneously across many countries encompassing the entire conflict spectrum.



² Avruch, Kevin. (2013) “Does our field have a centre? Thoughts from the academy.” *International Journal of Conflict Engagement and Resolution* (1) 1: 10-32.

³ Alliance for Peacebuilding. *Peacebuilding 2.0 Report*. 2012

Based on the two surveys, Peacebuilding 2.0 concluded that today (a) peacebuilding is a far larger community of practice than just the relatively small number of organizations specialized in areas of conflict resolution and/or conflict transformation. Durable peace requires myriad efforts at the intersection of diverse fields such as development, democracy and governance, human rights, and many more. In complex conflict environments, these sectors need to work together to magnify their collective impact; (b) in the conflict-affected societies in which peacebuilders operate, every intervention can contribute to reducing or augmenting conflict, often in unpredictable ways. Thus, a more cohesive approach is necessary to promote peace while avoiding negative consequences; and finally (c) a "conflict-sensitive" lens should inform the work of all actors to ensure that their interventions do not inadvertently contribute to conflict dynamics. These conclusions have direct implications for the professionalization of the expanding field of peacebuilding and the education of the next generation of peacebuilders.

Pre-Symposium Interviews:

To help enrich the discussions for the 2014 Symposium, the planning committee conducted a pre-symposium survey of Master's level graduate programs, the results of which was presented by Rachel Weathers throughout the agenda. The goal was to provide participants with a variety of perspectives on the state of peace and conflict resolution studies, and to assist in gauging potential patterns and themes across programs. In the span of two weeks 20 Program Directors (or their designates) were interviewed on topics that included: basic program descriptions, information about alumni, administrative and resource challenges faced in implementing the programs, the changes the Program Directors see and are responding to in the field, the developments taken to improve the program, and ideas about closing the education/employment gap and enabling graduates to launch their careers. The responses were anonymous and personal information was not required or elicited. Interview responses were then compiled, analyzed and reported on an aggregate basis at the symposium.⁴ At various places throughout the 2014 Symposium report, the results are discussed in accordance with their placement in the agenda.

Some common challenges identified by the pre-symposium interviews included coping with the US government's alignment with conflict resolution and peacebuilding, specialization of the field, and keeping up with trends and structural changes on the global stage. Common suggestions to remedy the challenges by the interviews were internships offering more real-world experience, specialized skill-building workshops, joint degrees, and online courses.

Break Out Groups:

Break out groups were used at selected points during the 2014 Symposium to allow participants to discuss their ideas toward the future of graduate education in peace and conflict resolution. In the first break out session, participants were asked to address the theme of "*How our programs are responding to an evolving field and rapidly changing world?*" Next, participants were asked to address three questions:

- 1) What are the most important and relevant changes in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in relation to our programs?
- 2) What developments in programming are called for in response to these changes in the field and in the world?
- 3) What specific developments have your programs undertaken in the last ten years to meet administrative and resource challenges and to provide new learning opportunities for your students?

⁴ Weathers, Rachel. Pre-Symposium Survey Report. May 2014. Contact Ron Fisher for copies.

Discussion points and highlights were recorded on a white board, and each of the three groups reported on the results of their deliberations. The photo shows Professor Tamra Pearson d'Estree of the University of Denver reporting out on her group's discussion.



Day Two – Assessing Challenges and Developing Opportunities

Challenge One:

Adapting our programs to an evolving field and changing world

Synthesis of Day One: Tatsushi Arai

To bridge the gap between the first day and the second day, Tatsushi Arai, pictured to the right, provided a comprehensive overview and analysis of the first day by selecting key points and themes among the day's events. To see the outcomes of the break out group discussions, watch the video below and view the accompanying powerpoint presentation. In the end, Tatsushi offered his own synthesis of the conflict resolution field as a participant in day one of the symposium, and he identified five areas of creative tension along with their subsequent paradoxes that require attention. First, in terms of the nature or future vision of the field and its core competencies, how do we make them coherent and yet diverse at the same time. Next, Tatsushi looked at the nature of educational programs, the domains of inquiry (inter- and multi-disciplinary), and the places of engagement. The paradox was found in coordinating our programs with each other and with the *Peacebuilding 2.0* model while remaining independent given the relationship between the [global] north and the south as well as the diverse realities of the international system. The *Peacebuilding 2.0* framework called for bold interaction between the conflict resolution and peacebuilding field and other fields, but in the third paradox, Tatsushi asked how can we define core practices and knowledge of our field and yet keep boundaries open and malleable in relation to other field. The fourth area of creative tension involved macro-structural contexts and resource acquisition in which the field needs to remain pragmatic yet ethical, and adaptive yet principled. Finally, the pedagogic focus of conflict resolution and peace studies is to enhance relevance and impact through specialization; however, the challenge is to keep conflict resolution integrated and holistic.



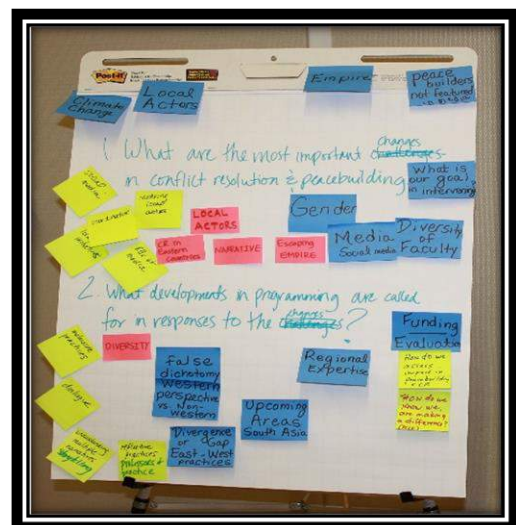
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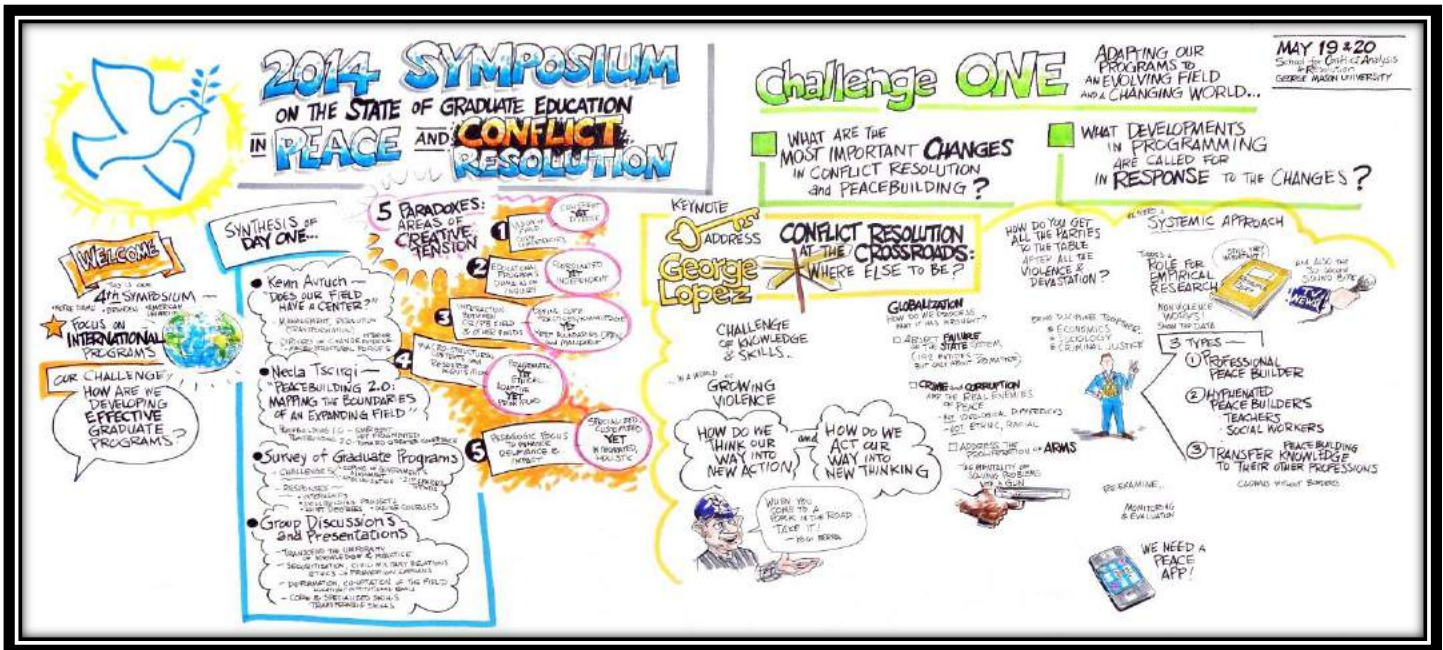
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Break Out Groups:

The first break out session of the day addressed the theme of the symposium, *How our programs are responding to an evolving field and a rapidly changing world*, and two questions relevant to that theme. First, what are the most important and changes in conflict resolution and peacebuilding? Second, what developments in programming are called for in response to the changes? To illustrate this discussion, we present the results from one of the break out groups.

In the picture to the right, we can see what a particular small group discussed. The concerns and suggestions of the group are posted on the flip chart using sticky notes. In response to highlight the first question, the group's concerns focused on local actors, gender, social media, faculty diversity, and climate change to identify some of the important





and relevant challenges to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. In response to the second question, on development of the field, the group suggested incorporating western versus non-western viewpoints, a concentration on upcoming regions of concern, and more diversity of people and ideas.

Keynote Address: George Lopez

Conflict Resolution at the Crossroads: Where Else to Be?

George Lopez introduces the cross roads where we find ourselves in conflict resolution and peace studies. Many programs across the country are struggling to figure out the essence of conflict and peace studies. This field has many challenges including keeping up with the ever changing landscape in methods and theories, but also new challenges in skills and what practitioners should teach. The field continues to evolve away from the Cold War framework in which many currently in academics were taught. There are new realities and knowledge of changing perceptions and attitudes toward violence and conflict. George Lopez quotes Tony Bing, “How do we think our way into new action, and acting our way into new thinking?” For Lopez, this is exactly where the field currently finds itself. Practitioners in the field have the ability to do both thinking and action, and blend them together. There is an explosion of vibrant research questions and methodologies from multiple disciplines which relate to conflict resolution and peace studies specifically and which legitimize our field.



A huge challenge for the field is how to we process and cope with globalization. Globalization affects conflict resolution and peace building in three ways: the abject failure of the state system, the spread and development of crime and corruption, and the proliferation of arms. The failure of the state system in combination with crime and corruption as a result of globalization led to many criminal justice programs looking for training in conflict resolution and transitional justice. Crime and corruption are the real enemies of peace, according to Lopez, who cited examples in Honduras, South Sudan, and even our very own streets. Also, peace studies fail to include

the study of arms races and militarism, which prohibit peace. The empirical reality is that the world is full of arms, especially in conflict zones, and there are very few courses on arms control that even address this issue.

Lopez asserted that the field needs systemic thinking to compensate for the shifts and changes in violence. The field should develop systemic thinking about conflict and violence as a complex system. The field cannot solve crime and corruption without integrating economics, sociology, psychology, and criminal justice. A key to successful systemic thinking is developing multidisciplinary structures and thought patterns. Lopez believes that systemic thinking skills are developed through research papers and grant writing, and we should not lose sight of these things in the future.

Conflict resolution and peace studies are challenged to prepare three types of people for future careers in the field, and our programs should adapt to all three types. First, there are professional peacebuilders, who want it all – everything the field has to offer: skills, knowledge, and experiences. Then, there are peace builders within various related professions such as teachers, nurses, and social workers, who want the skills of peacebuilding. Finally, peace builders from other fields who learn conflict resolution and peace building skills in order to transfer them to another discipline.

In conclusion, George maintained that we need to focus on what our work has always been about, and that is to train each student with the vision and the skills that they need to carry the work of peace and conflict resolution forward.

Watch the video here:

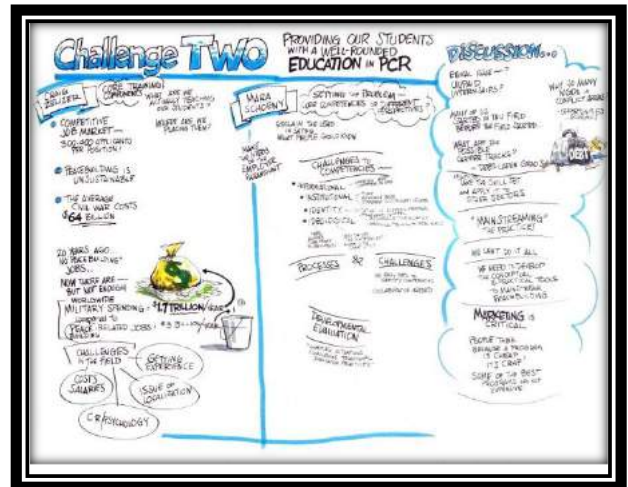
<http://scar.gmu.edu/event/symposium-state-of-graduate-education-peace-and-conflict-resolution>

Challenge Two: Providing our students with a well-rounded education in PCR

Craig Zelizer: Core training components in our programs?

Craig Zelizer opened by discussing three realities of conflict resolution and peace-building. First, there is a highly competitive job market with approximately 300-400 applicants per position. Twenty years ago, peacebuilding jobs were nonexistent; however, today there are not enough. Second, peacebuilding is unsustainable – the field continues to grapple with peace sustainability. And third, the average cost of a civil war is roughly 64 billion. Perhaps this is why military spending exceeds 1.7 trillion USD per year, while peacebuilding accounts for only 3 billion a year.

According to Zelizer, the challenges faced in educating students in the field were providing experience opportunities, the comparison of the cost and salary translation, localization, and conflict resolution combined with psychology. An understanding and incorporation of these elements will improve the prospects and education of our students.



Mara Schoeny: Core competencies or different perspectives on which our programs are based?

Mara Schoeny focused on a piece of the larger conversation of education for professional practice, in particular competency attainment. Since employers largely drive the identification of important competencies, professionals and academics need to discuss the best ways to teach necessary skills as has been done in the past with the Association for Conflict Resolution.

There are four ways to address a competency based approach to teaching. Perhaps the easiest is the informational side of competency attainment through the use of workshops and conferences to explain what competencies are. This is a benefit to both faculty and students, since the faculty could adjust curriculum based on student skills and interests, while students would have a better understanding of competencies. Workshops and conferences would allow faculty to better determine what students know and what they should know upon graduation. A significant challenge is keeping pace with competencies since they are localized; they will vary depending upon the situation.



Competencies can also be addressed institutionally. The biggest challenge here is deciding when to change, shift, or refocus curriculum in the correct timeframe. The university system moves very slowly in preparing new courses while our world changes quite rapidly. Do institutions allow students to design their own curriculum or do they help guide them through a particular interest? Most importantly, who has the authority to create significant change within the institution and the addition or implementation of competencies? These are questions we must ask.

Identity and ideological factors to competency attainment are much more difficult. Identity conflicts are complex systems as identity-based challenges in competency attainment are complex. Identity in competency attainment revolves around how people see the academy or institution and the role of education. There is a relevance concern within the academy. Many professors fear that faculty training may not meet up with competencies, which may lead to evaluation anxieties. The most significant challenge in teaching competencies is mirroring education to the real world. Students need the skills according to current real world situations. Finally, competency-based approaches lack a longer time frame to see change in mind set, or ideology. New perspectives require more time to develop and be appreciated by the students.

There is no easy path to identifying core competencies that students should know. A collaborative process is needed in the academy and the professional world in order to identify and build competencies. Programs are finally paying attention and combining knowledge and skills; however, there are still many questions that need answers.

Watch the video here:

<http://scar.gmu.edu/event/symposium-state-of-graduate-education-peace-and-conflict-resolution>

Open Discussion with Craig Zelizer and Mara Schoeny

After their presentations, Craig Zelizer and Mara Schoeny took the audience's questions, addressed their concerns, and allowed for open dialogue over many issues within conflict resolution and peace studies and its programs.

perceptions of competencies between the Academy and the professional world. However, this led nicely to a discussion moderated by Craig Zelizer with Sandra Melone of Search for Common Ground and Maria Stephan of the United States Institute of Peace, the goal of which was to discuss what competencies employers want in recently graduated students.

Panel on the Education-Employment Gap

Basic competencies was one of the major topics discussed in the Symposium, and this panel complemented the discussion asking two professionals to identify what skills they desired of students, rather than the perceptions of those already in the academic field. Craig Zelizer moderated the discussion between Sandra Melone, the Executive Vice President of Search for Common Ground, and Maria Stephan, Senior Policy Fellow of the United States Institute of Peace, recently in the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations in the State Department.

Sandra Melone began the discussion by highlighting the importance of events such as the 2014 Symposium. After quickly describing the role of the Search for Common Ground, Melone listed competencies her organization looks for in prospective employees and why. Competencies and traits that Search is looking for in prospective employees are some of the following: active listening, passion, belief in making a difference and effecting change, and maturity. Furthermore, the school attended by a prospective employee is not all that important and the quality of the person far outweighs school prestige. Finally, Melone pointed out that a willingness to travel is a must-have quality for an internship or employment candidate.

Next, Maria Stephan from USIP took the opportunity to cover both her experience at USIP, but also her experience at the State Department which at this point was more substantial. Maria noted the following competencies derived from her experiences at the State Department: the importance of “soft skills,” creativity in policy as well as a plan to carry out those ideas, being multi-linguistic and multi-cultural, understanding the military culture and mindset, deployment ability, field conflict analysis skills, field interviews, and strong quantitative skills and analysis.

To complete challenge three, instead of moving to break out groups, the panel invited comments and questions from the audience to which Sandra and Maria responded, and then closed the session with concluding comments.

Watch the video here:

<http://scar.gmu.edu/event/symposium-state-of-graduate-education-peace-and-conflict-resolution>

Challenge Four: Moving forward as a field of collaborative programs

Pre-Symposium Report: Improving Programs

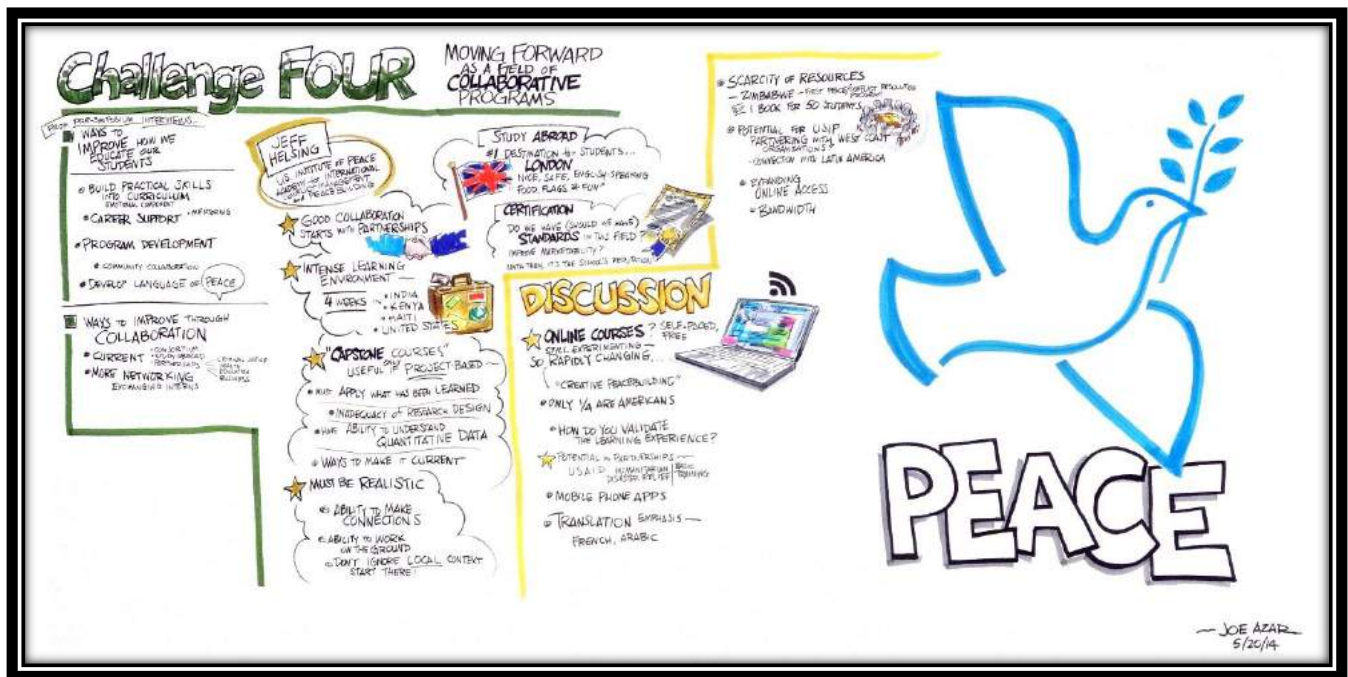
The pre-symposium report identified several areas in which programs can improve their impact. The focus of the report was how to educate students in peace and conflict studies programs. First, programs should find new ways to build practical skills into their curriculums. Students should obtain practical academic knowledge as well as the tools to implement through internships and real-world experiences. Also, as a result of more internships and experiences, programs will need to offer students more mentoring and professional development opportunities. This will boost the career support elements of programs. To further programs’ development, there are needs for online training and classes, integration of culture and arts training, emotional learning, and quantitative analysis. Program directors identified a desire to continually monitor and evaluate programs to stay current, and to promote entrepreneurial peacebuilding training.

Participants in the surveys also identified several means for community collaboration with their programs including developing new partnerships (with other disciplines, such as criminal justice, economics, business, and health), internships, and study abroad opportunities.

Speaker: Jeff Helsing: Opportunities for Collaborative Education

The final speaker of the day was Jeff Helsing, Associate Vice President for the Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding at the United States Institute of Peace, who spoke on collaborative education and the development of the peace and conflict resolution profession in relation to an evolving field and a changing world.

The main ideas of Jeff Helsing’s discourse were developing good partnerships with other disciplines, promoting study abroad opportunities, creating quality capstone courses, and being realistic in these endeavors. These ideas lead into a group discussion which focused on online courses, potential partnerships, mobile phone applications, foreign language acquisition, and the lack of resources currently available.



Conclusion

In wrapping up the day’s activities, the planning committee thanked everyone who contributed to the day’s success, particularly the speakers and panel members. The audience then reviewed the graphic illustration of the day, and were treated to a poetry reading on themes related to violence and peace by members of a high school artists group. A reception was then held to finish off the day.

Appendix: Bionotes of Presenters

Tatsushi Arai is a Fellow of the Center for Peacemaking Practice at George Mason University's School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution and Associate Professor of Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation at the School for International Training (SIT) Graduate Institute. As a mediator, trainer, NGO adviser, and/or consultant to United Nations agencies, he has actively contributed to peace building initiatives in Rwanda, Syria/Lebanon, Israel/Palestine, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Myanmar, Nepal, China-Japan relations, the Taiwan Strait, and the United States. He is the author of *Creativity and Conflict Resolution* (2009, Routledge) and *Enacting a Culture of Peace* (forthcoming, UNESCO Myanmar), and co-author of *Clash of National Identities: China, Japan and the East China Sea Territorial Dispute* (2013, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars).

Kevin Avruch is Henry Hart Rice Professor of Conflict Resolution, Dean of the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, and senior fellow at the university's Peace Operations Policy Program in the School of Public Policy. Avruch has published approximately sixty-five articles and essays as well as being the author or editor of at least seven books. He is author most recently of *Context and Pretext in Conflict Resolution: Culture, Identity, Power and Practice* (2012), and editor, with Christopher Mitchell, of *Conflict Resolution and Human Needs: Linking Theory and Practice* (2013).

Ronald Fisher is a Professor of International Peace and Conflict Resolution in the School of International Service at American University. He was the founding coordinator of the Applied Social Psychology Graduate Program at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, and has taught at a number of universities in Canada, the United States, and Europe in peace studies and conflict resolution. His primary interest is interactive conflict resolution, which involves informal third party interventions in protracted and violent ethnopolitical conflict. His publications include a number of books at the interface of social psychology and conflict resolution as well as numerous articles in interdisciplinary journals in peace and conflict resolution.

Jeffery Helsing is the Associate Vice President at the Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding at the United States Institute of Peace. His responsibilities include overseeing the content of USIP's education and training programs, and developing curriculum in the United States and in conflict zones around the world. Helsing worked extensively with groups in Israel and the Palestinian Authority for over eight years developing new conflict resolution skills in the region. Although Helsing worked primarily in the Middle East, he has close to twenty years of conflict resolution training experience as well as twenty years of teaching experience at American University in Cairo, George Washington University, Swarthmore College and the University of Pennsylvania. Helsing obtained his doctorate in political science from Columbia University.

George Lopez is the Vice President of the Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding at the United States Institute for Peace. Lopez spent 27 years at the Joan B. Kroc Institute of International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame and held the Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., chair in Peace Studies. Lopez's research has been highly published across a wide range of social science and policy journals, and he has been a frequent commentator on issues involving war and peace in national and international media outlets. Lopez has served in an advisory capacity to a number of foundations and organizations regarding peacebuilding and related issues.

Sandra Melone is the Executive Vice President of the Search for Common Ground, an NGO dedicated to resolving conflict around the world. Her previous work includes: a founding member of the European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation (EPCPT); a founding member of the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO); a founding member of the Child Soldiers Initiative (CSI); the Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors of the Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP); and human rights advocacy with Amnesty International. Melone is an expert in conflict resolution, mediation, negotiation, consensus-building, team-building, facilitation, cross-cultural communication, fundraising and NGO management. Melone

advocates for the role of NGOs during Track II diplomacy and reconciliation efforts; the complementarities of governmental, non-governmental, intergovernmental and private sector initiatives; and civil-military cooperation.

Mara Schoeny is an Assistant Professor at the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University and the Director of the School's Graduate Certificate Program. She teaches courses in research and evaluation methods, practice skills and the integration of inter-disciplinary approaches to conflict analysis and resolution. She was a 1998 USIA Visiting Fellow in the Curriculum Development Exchange Program, in residence at Yerevan State University, Armenia. She is a former youth camp director with experience in traditional camp settings as well as dialogue and co-existence camps for youth from conflict areas. Her research and practice interests include nonviolence, education, training, and dialogue processes.

Maria Stephan is a doctoral and masters graduate from Tufts University, and received both the Harry S. Truman and J. William Fulbright scholarships. Currently, she is a senior policy fellow at the United States Institute of Peace and a nonresident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council. At the Atlantic Council, Stephan focuses on the dynamics of civil resistance and their relevance for violent conflict prevention and democratic development. Stephan, previously, worked for the United States State Department. At the State Department, Stephan worked on both policy and operations in the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO). Her assignments at the State Department include engaging the Syrian opposition in Turkey and subnational governance and civil-military planning in Afghanistan. Stephan has experience working with the United States Department of Defense, and at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

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