

Introduction to Conflict Resolution

CR301U

Tuesday/Thursday 10am –11:45am

Winter 2010

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Required Reading:

TEXT: Beer, J. & Stief, E. (1997). *The mediator's handbook*. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers.

Online Resources: Additional reading provided online (*links on syllabus and BB course site*)

Course Description:

This class will introduce students to the field of conflict resolution studies. It will explore both the nature of conflict and our understanding of what resolution seeks to achieve. Particular emphasis will be placed on the strategies students currently employ towards conflict in their own lives, with suggestions and examples that broaden their understanding of what is possible. Small groups, simulated conflict situations, role plays, and examples from community partners work will provide students with the opportunity to both understand their own strategies and develop new ones.

This course is designed as a service-learning course. Students are asked to perform at least **fifteen hours of community service** over the course of the term with an agency or organization that serves the Portland area. This experiential learning will be used to both inform and expand in-class work and assignments.

Finally, this class will practice what bell hooks calls engaged pedagogy. Pedagogy is the “work or occupation of teaching,” engaged hopefully speaks for itself. What this means is that students will be expected to actively engage with the information offered by the instructor and the materials, both in class and in the assignments. Class format will rarely involve lecturing, but will instead employ dialogue between students and students, and students and instructor. Dialogue here is defined as “a kind of speech that is humble, open, and focused on collaborative learning. It is communication that can awaken consciousness...”. This requires that both the instructor and the students think of them/our selves as knowledgeable learners who can both teach and learn in this class.

Course Expectations:

Students are expected to be present in class and actively participate in discussion. Students will be asked to participate in small, in-class discussion groups on a regular basis, and will be encouraged to take leadership in discussing course materials. Students are expected to have access to a computer, and to the internet. Course resources will be posted on Blackboard.

There is a very reasonable amount of reading expected which should free you up to spend careful attention on the writing assignments. Special emphasis will be placed on the development of clear, direct, assertive communication that involves active listening and respect for others. This kind of communication is to be practiced and incorporated into the written assignments, as well as in the weekly small group and class discussions.

Reflection Papers:

Each week you are expected to write a 1-2 page reflection paper on the assigned readings (except during weeks 1, 5 and 10). Papers will be collected on Tuesdays at the beginning of class. The paper should be a reflection on your thoughts about the readings, as opposed to a simple summary or book report, and you are encouraged to share any insights or questions that you have in response. You can draw upon your own personal experiences to highlight your thoughts and reactions. Papers are expected to be well written and proofed for errors.

Midterm Paper:

The midterm paper is a five to eight (5-8) page research paper on an area of conflict resolution that is of particular interest to you. Your paper must follow either MLA or APA style and must use at least two academic sources outside of the required reading. Midterm papers are due in class on Thursday, February 4th.

Final Paper:

The final paper is a five to eight (5-8) page paper that incorporates all you have learned from your service learning project into all that you have learned from the readings and discussions in this course. Using academic writing, this paper can be a reflection on your personal experience, emphasizing your learning about conflict resolution. Final papers are due on Thursday, March 11th (the final class period).

Evaluation:

Grades will be based on class performance and participation, seven reflection papers, your midterm paper and final paper. Reflection papers are worth 70 points (10 points each), the midterm paper is worth 100 points, the final paper is worth 100 points, and participation in class is worth 85 points (17 classes @ 5 points each). In this system an A=309-355, a B=264-308, a C=218-263, a D=173-217, and an F=172 and below.

SCHEDULE *(the date on the left is the date on which readings and assignments are due)*

Week One

January 5 **Introduction to class and members**

January 7 **Discussion of Engaged Pedagogy**
Introduction to CR Communication

Reading: bell hooks: Engaged Pedagogy:
www.infed.org/thinkers/hooks.htm
Story 1: The Train Clanked and Rattled:
<http://www.wattstapes.com/dobson.htm>

Week Two

January 12 **Discussion of “Conflict,” “Resolution, and “Conflict Resolution”**

First Reflection Due!

Reading: What are Intractable Conflicts:
http://beyondintractability.org/essay/meaning_intractability/?nid=1003
TEXT pp. 3-24

January 14

Developing Listening Skills

Reading: Story 2: Vinoba Bhava:
<http://www.berkeley-acupuncture.com/?p=17>
Empathetic Listening:
http://beyondintractability.org/essay/empathic_listening/?nid=1215
TEXT pp. 27-65

Week Three

January 19

Conflict Styles

Second Reflection Due!

Reading: Competitive and Cooperative Approaches to Conflict:
http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/competitive_cooperative_frames/?nid=1140
TEXT pp. 67-86

January 21

NO CLASS – SERVICE LEARNING DAY

Week Four

January 26

Power

Third Reflection Due!

Reading: Story 3: the Messiah is One of Us:
http://www.luthersem.edu/stewardship/resource_detail.asp?resource_id=199
Power Inequities:
http://beyondintractability.org/essay/power_inequities/

January 28

Context of Conflict and Resolution

Reading: TEXT pp. 105-130
Story 4: The Dalai Lama and the Master of Kung Fu:
<http://vajrkrishna.wordpress.com/2009/05/03/the-dalai-lama-and-the-master-of-kung-fu/>

Week Five

February 2

Culture and Conflict

No Reflection Due This Week!

Reading: Story 5: I'm Real:
<http://books.google.com/books?id=0s1vjdBxYwgC&lpg=PA360&ots=zgYZF6g5dx&dq=%22The%20whole%20family%20went%20out%20to%20dinner%20one%20evening%22&pg=PA360#v=onepage&q=%22The%20whole%20fam>

[ily%20went%20out%20to%20dinner%20one%20evening%22&f=false](#)

Culture and Conflict:

http://beyondintractability.org/essay/culture_conflict/?nid=1186

February 4

Morals, Values, and Ethics

Midterm Due!

Reading: Ethics, Theories of:

http://www.sage-ereference.com/ethics/Article_n304.html

Week Six

February 9

NO CLASS – SERVICE LEARNING

February 11

Understanding Violence

Fourth Reflection Due!

Reading: Gregg Barak: Violence and nonviolence:

<http://books.google.com/books?id=-mCXeWxmjUC&lpg=PA3&ots=UzIuJnzRFN&dq=barak%20%22Secrets%20of%20Violence%20and%20nonviolence%22&pg=PA3#v=onepage&q=&f=false>

Week Seven

February 16

Enmification

Fifth Reflection Due!

Reading: Story 6: Three Questions:

<http://www.yuni.com/library/docs/200.html>

Watch Philip Zimbardo's TED talk:

http://www.ted.com/talks/philip_zimbardo_on_the_psychology_of_evil.html

February 18

Nonviolence

Reading: Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail":

<http://almaz.com/nobel/peace/MLK-jail.html>

Week Eight

February 23

Media Violence

Sixth Reflection Due!

Reading: Story 7: We are three, you are three:

<http://books.google.com/books?id=8OE9qr4VjigC&lpg=PA29&ots=hOzUSgBiQX&dq=%22when%20the%20bishop%27s%20ship%20stopped%22&pg=PA29#v=onepage&q=%22when%20the%20bishop%27s%20ship%20stopped%22&f=false>

Read entire Free Press beginners' guide:

http://www.freepress.net/content/beginners_guide

February 25

NO CLASS – SERVICE LEARNING

Week Nine

March 2

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Seventh Reflection Due!

Reading: Read 5 stories at: <http://www.theforgivenessproject.com>
TEXT pp. 133-148

March 4

Neutrality

Reading: *Social Liberation and CR* (PDF on BB Site)

Week Ten

March 9

Goals of Mediation/ Transformation versus Resolution

Reading: TEXT pp. 89-102

Story 9: Heaven and Hell:

<http://bkmeditation.blogspot.com/2007/08/heaven-and-hell.html>

Interview with Mary Parker Follet (PDF on BB Site)

March 11

Conflict Resolution Final un-Jeopardy!

FINAL PAPERS DUE!

Please notify instructor if you need special accommodation.

Work submitted by students will be evaluated for academic honesty. Any breach of academic honesty will be met with the consequences established by Portland State University policy.