

# Conflict Resolution Techniques And Practice

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CONF 300, SECTION 3 –SPRING 2013

THURSDAYS 4:30-7:10PM

## INSTRUCTOR:

Professor Pamela Struss, Doctoral Candidate

Phone: 703-996-4165 or Cell: 703-216-1933 9A-9P

Email: pstruss@gmu.edu

Office Hours: Thursday 3:30-4:30P or by appointment

Office Hours Location: Robinson B 365

## Course Description

GMU Course Catalog description: “300 Conflict Resolution Techniques and Practice. Prerequisites: CONF 101 and completed 60 credits. Advanced consideration of CONF 101 topics, introduction of the core notion of reflective practice, [critical thinking], conflict resolution techniques practice, third party roles, and ethics.”

Reviewing and building upon the topics learned in CONF 101, this course explores the techniques, practices, and processes used in the conflict analysis and resolutions (CAR) field. It will use experiential learning tools (videos, role plays, speakers, etc... to enhance your understanding of theories, frameworks, and models used in CAR. Because this class uses experiential learning, you must attend and participate in class. Experiential learning provides “hands on” experience to help you learn how to use these skills. You will have the opportunity to meet and hear practitioners discuss their experiences and gain insight how theory meets practice. You will be able to try different roles either as a party, mediator, facilitator, negotiator, or observer based on simulated scenarios (e.g. simulated conflicts, which may have similarities to real conflicts).

Interpersonal, small group, community, and international conflict will be presented. However distinctive emphasis will be placed on interpersonal and small group conflicts along with their practice; they are building blocks for practicing conflict resolution in larger and more complex social conflicts. While students will learn and practice several conflict resolution process models and roles, the goal is not to be fully trained as mediators or facilitators, although this course will be an excellent introduction should students decide to pursue further training or credentialing in such areas.

## Course Objectives

As a conflict resolution student and CONF 300 you will:

- Develop an appreciation of the dynamic relationship between conflict analysis and resolution.

- Gain an understanding of reflective practice in both personal and professional terms.
- Explore specific practices and techniques as they build upon conflict analysis and move conflict toward resolution.
- Consider aspects of culture, gender, power, and ethics as they affect both conflict as well as resolution attempts.
- Practice various conflict resolution techniques.
- Increase critical thinking abilities.

## Course Reading Materials

### Books

Bolton, Robert. ed. 1986. People Skills, How to Assert Yourself, Listen to Others, and Resolve Conflicts. New York, Simon-Schuster.

Furlong, Gary. ed. 2005. The Conflict Resolution Toolbox. Mississauga, John Wiley & Sons Canada.

Mayer, Bernard, ed. 2012. The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

### Electronic/Blackboard

Katz, N., J. Lawyer. 1992. "Conflict Management", Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills. Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

Winslade, J., G. Monk . 2000. "Narrative Mediation: What is It?" Narrative Mediation: A New Approach to Conflict Resolution. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

## Course Requirements

Attendance & Participation	15 %
Assignments	
Reflection Paper	15%
Mid-term Paper	20%
Final Paper	25%
Group Project	25%
Extra Credit	5 pts

### Paper Requirements- 3 Total-Reflection, Mid-term & Final

Font 12pt, APA, Title centered in bold on first page,  
 Name  
 CONF 300, Sec 3  
 Professor Struss  
 Paper (Reflection, Mid-term, or Final)

Date  
Header: Last Name, Page Numbers: Top Right Corner  
For additional information see Paper Rubric Handout

### Grading Scale

<u>Points Accumulated</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>
98-100	A+
93-97	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
79-82	B-
75-78	C
69-71	C-
61-68	D
0-60	F

### Course Expectations

#### Attendance

Because this is a “hands-on”, experiential class, attendance is imperative. There is no way to simulate the class experience through reading notes from classmates or by the readings.

#### Preparation

By completing the readings for the class, you will be able to contribute to the class discussion and ask pertinent questions. Being prepared for class is a great stress reducer as well.

#### Etiquette

Be respectful of your classmates; turn all cell phones to vibrate, and no texting. Please raise your hand to be recognized and do not talk over when other students are speaking. I want to hear what each of you has to say. No bullying allowed.

When we have speakers, laptops need to be closed and cell phones put away. Be respectful.

#### Course completion

Providing you attend class and turn in the assignments, you should have no problem completing the course. If you have challenges, please speak with me sooner rather than later.

### My Teaching Philosophy

As your Teacher, I believe

- All students have the ability to learn, each has individual strengths and weakness; and it is my responsibility to design the course in such a way that the student’s needs are met.  
*Students all learn differently whether it’s visual, auditory or kinetic. The class will incorporate each learning style.*

- Students learn best when they can construct their own knowledge by applying the course content to their world of understanding.  
*When students are able to assimilate in the information into their life experiences then it becomes real and usable.*
- Student learning is enhanced through role plays, individual research and presentations.  
*Using alternatives to lecturing, students will discover and deepen their knowledge in an area of individual interest, experience what being in a role is like, and be given an opportunity to explore their teaching methodology.*
- Optimism and encouragement are powerful.  
*Displaying a love and passion for the material presented can ignite passion in others. Validating a student's contributions fosters their sense of self-worth.*
- A teacher will forever be a student.  
*Continuing to research, explore and experience the subject areas of interest fosters and models lifelong learning. May I always be teachable.*

## Academic Policies and Information

### Honor Code

#### Academic Integrity

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

"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](http://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 requires that all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. S-CAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it."

## Student Resources

### GMU Email Accounts

Students must use their Mason email accounts—either the existing “MEMO” system or a new “MASONLIVE” account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

### SCAR Undergraduate Advising

Brydin Banning ([bbanning@gmu.edu](mailto:bbanning@gmu.edu)) and Jane Walker ([jwalkerq@gmu.edu](mailto:jwalkerq@gmu.edu))

### GMU Writing Center

A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

### Office of Disability Services

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

### English Language Institute

<http://eli.gmu.edu/>

### Library Services

“Ask a Librarian” <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

### Counseling

Counseling And Psychological Services (CAPS): (703) 993-2380;  
<http://caps.gmu.edu>

### University Policies

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

### Direction to all Campus’ and Campus’ Maps

<http://www.gmu.edu/resources/welcome/Directions-to-GMU.html>

## RUBRICS

### Thursday Class Process

Current Event/Announcements

Discussion of Readings

Lecture

Break

Lecture/Group Meeting/Simulation

Questions

## **PAPERS**

There will be a total of three papers due this semester: reflection, mid-term and the final. Each paper will cover a topic of your choosing as it relates to conflict and/or conflict resolution. Papers should be written with proper sentence structure, proper diction and use of words, correct spelling and punctuation, correct use of APA format, citations, and references. You may use block quotes in a limited amount, however quotes cannot make up the body of the paper. Please let me hear your voice and point of view.

Reflection paper- *2-4 pages*; share your personal experience of a conflict either in your past or it can be current. Identify the parties, issues, current status and what you hope will happen. No references needed.

Mid-term paper- *5-8 pages*; using one of the mapping tools presented, select a conflict and identify the mapping tool used to explain the conflict. Explain the mapping tool selected then identify the specific information corresponding to the portion of the mapping sections. Use a minimum of 3 references and a maximum of 5.

Final paper- *7-10 pages*; discuss your field of Interest as it relates to conflict analysis and resolution. Identify what tools could be used effectively and explain their relevance. Offer an example, real or hypothetical in your chosen field. Use a minimum of 4 references and a maximum of 7.

Extra Credit- *1-2 pages*; write your reflections of the observation of CAR event (1 point each) or a court community mediation (5 points). No references needed.

### **Papers (each)**

**Abstract-** Summary of paper (max 150 words)

**Introduction/Statement of Problem**

**Explanation/Body**

**Conclusion**

**Writing, Grammar, & Mechanics: APA style, 12 pt font,**

**Max 100 points**

Max 10 points

Max 20 points

Max 40 points

Max 20 points

Max 10 points

### **GROUP PROJECT**

Conflict Topic Summary Sheet

Group Contract

Presentation

Reflection of Group Project Experience by individual members

Grade report of individual members

**Max 100 points**

Max 25 points


Max 5 points

Max 55points

Max 10 points

Max 5 points

## Weekly Readings and Assignments

	DATE	TOPIC TO BE COVERED	READING DUE	 ASSIGNMENT DUE
<b>WEEK 1</b>	20- Jan	Introduction to Conflict Analysis and Resolution Techniques & Practice		
		Review of Essential CAR Terms		
<b>WEEK 2</b>	27- Jan	Power	Mayer, Ch. 3	
		Frameworks/Human Factors	Bolton, Ch. 1; Mayer, Ch.1- 2	
		Intro to Practice	Furlong, Ch. 1	
<b>WEEK 3</b>		Communication	Bolton, Ch. 2-3; Mayer, Ch. 7	
		Dialogue/Culture	Mayer, Ch. 4	
		Overview of Models	Furlong, Ch. 2	
<b>WEEK 4</b>	10- Feb	Neutrality/Resolution	Mayer, Ch. 5	Reflection Paper
		Intervention	Mayer, Ch. 6&12	
		Circle of Conflict	Furlong, Ch. 4	
<b>WEEK 5</b>	17- Feb	Mediation	Mayer, Ch. 10	

		Mediation Practice	Bolton, Ch. 12-14	
		Triangle of Satisfaction	Furlong, Ch. 5	
		<b>Group Project Meetings</b>		
<b>WEEK 6</b>	<b>24-Feb</b>	Negotiation	Mayer, Ch. 8-9	
		Negotiation Practice Boundary Model	Furlong, Ch. 6	
<b>WEEK 7</b>	<b>3-Mar</b>	Facilitation	<b>TBA</b>	
		Interest, Rights, and Power	Furlong, Ch. 7	Mid Term Paper
<b>WEEK 8</b>	<b>10-Mar</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>		
<b>WEEK 9</b>	<b>17-Mar</b>	Dynamics of Trust	Furlong, Ch. 8	
		Conflict Resolution Alternative Practices	Mayer, Ch. 11	
<b>WEEK 10</b>	<b>24-Mar</b>	Bargaining	<b>TBA</b>	
		Arbitration	<b>TBA</b>	
<b>WEEK 11</b>		Dimensions of Conflict	Furlong, Ch. 9	
	<b>31-Mar</b>	Litigation	No reading	
		Group Project Meetings Social Style Model	Furlong, Ch. 10	
<b>WEEK 12</b>	<b>6-Apr</b>	Appreciative Inquiry	Cooperrider & Whitney-Electronic	



		Reflective Practice	Bolton: Ch. 4-7
<b>WEEK 13</b>	<b>13- Apr</b>	Narrative	Winslade & Monk: Ch. 1- Electronic
		International Approaches Moving Beyond the Conflict	No reading Furlong, Ch. 11
<b>WEEK 14</b>	<b>20- Apr</b>	Organizational Development Synthesis	<b>TBA</b> Bolton, Ch. 15; Mayer, Ch. 12;
<b>WEEK 15</b>	<b>27- Apr</b>	Class Presentations	
		Class Presentations	
<b>WEEK 16</b>	<b>7- May</b>	Reading Day	
<b>FINAL</b>			Final Paper









**HAPPY HOLIDAYS**  
**REST, RELAX, YOU DESERVE IT!**