

CONFLICT RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES AND PRACTICE

CONF 300, SECTION 3 –SPRING 2014

TUESDAYS 4:30-7:10PM

INSTRUCTOR:

Professor Pamela Struss, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Friday 11:00-noon or by appointment

Office Hours Location: Northeast Modular, Office 117

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

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

Katz, N., Lawyer, J.W., Sweedler, M. 2011. Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills. Kendall Hunt Publishing Company, Dubuque.

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

Electronic/Blackboard

To be posted

Course Requirements

Attendance & Participation	20 %
Assignments	
Reflection Paper	15%
Final Paper Proposal	5 %
Final Paper	20%
Exercises	15%
Group Project	25%
Extra Credit	5 pts

Attendance & Participation

Each class attended is worth 6 points	90
Presenting reading is worth 10 points	<u>10</u>
Total make up of attendance & participation grade	100 %

Assignments-

Papers

There will be a total of three papers due this semester: reflection, final paper proposal 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.

The best way to write an excellent paper is to write and rewrite. It is difficult to do the final edit so using a trusted friend or classmate to read it significantly helps improve your work.

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.

Final paper proposal- 2 pages (including bibliography); identify your conflict topic and one of the appropriate mapping tools presented. Use the mapping tool to briefly explain the conflict. List up to 10 but no less than 4 sources that will be used in the final paper. Use a minimum of 4 references and a maximum of 10.

Final paper- 4-8 pages (not including bibliography); building upon your proposal discuss your chosen topic as it relates to conflict analysis and resolution; expand upon each of the map components and identify the positions, needs and interests of the conflict parties. Offer suggestions you would offer to help bring resolution. Will it be a dialogue and facilitation, negotiation and mediation, or litigation, or something else; support your choice. Use a minimum of 4 references and a maximum of 10.

Exercises in Katz Book

Defending Assertion Messages- it will help you construct appropriate messages

Appreciating Assertion Messages- it will help you construct appropriate messages

Conflict Management Style Survey- it will help you become aware of your preferred conflict approach and management.

Conflict Management Exercise- you will become aware of the conflict management techniques you use depending on the person, relationship and circumstance.

Conflict Reflection Exercise 1- you will reflect on conflicts you personally have been involved in and become aware of your style used.

Group Project

Deliverable-3-5 page summary; power point presentation; handout, simulation

For additional information see Group Project Rubric Handout on Blackboard

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. By attending the any of following events a maximum of 5 points added to final grade. The point worth is listed by the event. Paper is due within 1 week of attendance of event.

Brown Bags	1 point each
Dialogue and Difference	2 points each
Court Observation	5 points
SCAR World Café Film Series	5 points
Lecture-TBA	5 points

Grading Scale

Points Accumulated **Letter Grade**

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

Class Rubric

Tuesday Class Process

Current Event/Announcements
 Presentation and Discussion of Readings
 Lecture
 Break
 Lecture/Group Meeting/Simulation
 Questions

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

I expect you will come to class prepared, having read the assigned reading will be able to participate in discussions and able to answer pertinent questions.

Etiquette

Be respectful of your classmates; turn all cell phones to vibrate, and no texting. Part of displaying respect is not to chat on line, text message or tweeting during class. 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. 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) and Jane Walker (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>