

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND MEDIATION

COURSE OVERVIEW AND SYLLABUS

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Course Length: 6 Weeks (40 Hours)

Education Course: Non-Credited Certification Course

COURSE DESCRIPTION

You have engaged in conflicts since you were a toddler and have undoubtedly continued to encounter conflict throughout your life with strangers, friends, family, romantic partners, coworkers, merchants, and more. This course is designed to provide you with a deeper understanding of conflict, drawing from diverse disciplines including communication, psychology, politics, and business. We will focus on understanding and analyzing the layered sources and causes of conflict, the impact of power, personal styles, and perception, and the processes through which conflict can be managed and resolved.

An important part of this course will involve turning our classroom into a conflict skills workshop. Activities, discussion groups, and simulations will provide opportunity to reflect, hone, and develop conflict management skills. Since everyone is already entering this classroom with experience in facing conflict, the goal of these workshops is to create a safe space to think differently, try out new skills and approaches, and overcome barriers that may have challenged your ability to constructively engage in conflict situations in the past.

It is important that class time become an environment for open and honest reflection. I encourage you to use your own personal experience as a part of our discussions and be sensitive to the perspectives and experiences of others. This critical self-reflection is very valuable in making each of us better at handling conflicts.

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course a student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the history of conflict resolution, mediation, negotiation, and cultures;
2. Demonstrate basic mediation and negotiation skills, techniques and styles;

3. Demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills including listening and keen perception;
4. Identify and discuss ethical issues in negotiation techniques and strategies;
5. Identify mediation and negotiation opportunities and design appropriate strategies for their effective pursuit;
6. Evaluate and critique the reasoning and skill of others in a mature, thoughtful and respectful manner;
7. Improve your skills in Effectiveness of Mediation; Conditions for Effective Mediation; Factors Determining Use of Mediation; and Mediator Behavior in the face of conflict;
8. Conduct a conflict analysis of Communication Skills; Creating a Supportive Environment for Reflective Thinking—Caucus Zone; and Legal Ethical Issues.

COURSE SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

Topics

Day 1

Introduction to Conflict Management theory and principles.

Day 2

Introduction to Community-based mediation and negotiation management.

Day 3

Strategies to verbal and non-verbal communication
- Sources of Power.

Day 4

Ethical Considerations: Trust in Mediation & Negotiation.

Day 5

Creating a Supportive Environment for Reflective; Thinking—Caucus Zone; and Legal Ethical Issues

Day 6

Individual differences; Conflict & Mediation across cultures - Best practices.

Additional in-class structure:

Videos: "A Neighbor to Neighbor Conflict Role Play - The Mediation Process "
Length: 31 Minutes

" Solving a Complex International Business Problem "
Length: 40 Minutes

READING SUGGESTIONS

- Mayer, Bernard (2000). The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution. San Francisco, CA: Jossey---Bass.
- Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In, Fisher, Penguin Books, 1991 (available online and at most bookstores)
- The Third Side: Why We Fight and How We Can Stop, Ury, Penguin Books, 2000 (available online and at most bookstores)
- Negotiation: Readings, Exercises, and Cases, 6th Edition Roy J. Lewicki, McGraw-Hill Irwin, 2010 (ISBN-13 9780073530314)

COURSE POLICIES

This course conflict management and mediation course is created to teach those willing to create a safe and sustainable future, by managing and resolving conflicts with one another. Our most pressing global challenges we face today require that we show skillfulness in engaging with each other, recognizing how we can creatively approach our interdependent goals to create new opportunities for a better future.

There are both substantive and procedural ways that this course is infused with the theme of sustainability. Reading materials and assignments will be handled entirely through electronic means.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

You are expected to attend all classes for this course, be prepared, and be on time. The class is built around your being in attendance and engaged in class activities, exercises and discussions. It is each student's responsibility to attend all sessions in order to receive your non-credited certification.

If you are absent for two or more consecutive class sessions due to a legitimate excuse, you are required to submit a letter signed by a person in a position to make an authoritative determination as to the validity of the absence, including the phone number of the individual who signed, and presented to GSFL prior or upon returning to training sessions. GSFL reserve the right to contact the person who signed your letter to check on the validity of the content and authority of the letter. These are the only situations in which you will be allowed to reschedule your course. If you fail to comply, no refunds are given for missed sessions or making up of missed sessions.

Students who miss class are responsible for obtaining all material and information that they missed. This includes any changes to the schedule that are announced in class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

GSFL expects all students to uphold intellectual honesty in their academic work. In this class, it is essential that you demonstrate honor in maintaining the confidentiality of the role specific information for course role play exercises.

ASSIGNMENTS (IN CLASS)

•30 % Participation Assignments

Preparation, self-awareness, and an ability to be reflective about one's manner of engaging around conflict is essential to success in managing conflict. Completing in-class exercises and role-play evaluations can assist you in becoming more reflective and self-aware in conflict situations. Completion of the reading assignments and participation in the course discussion will add much to your learning and facilitate more robust learning.

•30% Applied Conflict Assignment

In order to develop skills in conflict assessment, groups of students (2---3 students per group) will be responsible for assessing a conflict of their choice (in consultation with the instructor). Ideally, students will select an interpersonal, local, or community conflict through gathering background data etc.

Disclaimer: If a topic is deemed unsuitable for the assignment, students may be asked to modify their chosen topic.

15% Applied Conflict Assignment: The group will be responsible for producing a paper with a brief summary of the conflict, a conflict analysis mapping key parties and their underlying needs and interests, a description of the conflict dynamics to date, and a proposed conflict intervention strategy. In the paper students should reference (and interrogate) relevant concepts, theory, and models from class and other outside sources. Students must utilize at least 2 conflict analysis tools in the paper.

•**25% Applied Conflict Assignment:** The points at the end of the semester will draw on materials discussed in lectures, quizzes, reading assignments and discussions throughout the whole course.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Participation assignments cannot be made up. Late submission of the Applied Conflict Analysis paper will be penalized as follows, unless you have communicated a valid excuse PRIOR to the due date. If the Applied Conflict Analysis paper is late by 1 day, each member of the group will receive a 2-point deduction.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

The grade “I” or Incomplete is given only to students whose work has been qualitatively satisfactory, but when inability to attend class and complete a small portion of assignments due to an excuse it is the student’s responsibility to request arrangements for completion of course work.