

MENNO SIMONS COLLEGE
&
THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

MEDIATION SKILLS WORKSHOP

CRS-3221/1.5 - 001

Course Syllabus.... Winter 2010

Term	Winter 2011	Instructor	Rick Schmidt, AIC, BSA., MA
Term Dates	January - April, 2011	Office	N/A
Class Time	January 21, 18:00 - 21:00 January 22, 9:00 - 17:00 January 23, 9:00 - 17:00	Office hours	after class, or by request
Room	MS116 (Menno Simons College)	Phone	667-4292 (home office)
Exam	None (instead, a 5-part personal journal)	E-mail	agree@shaw.ca
		Website	www.rickschmidt.net/mediationskills.html

Pgm. Coordinator.... Rick McCutcheon
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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: This workshop course will focus on the process and skills of interpersonal mediation. This will be accomplished through small group interaction and participation in mediation simulations. Students will be exposed to a wide range of interpersonal conflict scenarios.

Pre-requisite: CRS.1200/6 Introduction to Conflict Resolution Studies

Co-requisite: CRS.3220/3 Models for Conflict Transformation

II. TEACHING METHODS AND OBJECTIVES: This workshop course will place its primary emphasis on experiential learning. Micro skills essential for mediation will be developed through interactive learning exercises. Brief presentations will set the context for applying both theory and skills in conflict mediation simulations. Students will be challenged with practical scenarios, followed by debriefing and group discussion designed to make clear connections to real life situations. Developing critical self-reflection skills is a central aspect of this workshop course.

III. REQUIRED READINGS & MATERIALS LIST:

Resolution Skills Centre. Mediation Skills (current edition) **L required for use in class! 7**

(This manual can be downloaded free at: http://resolutionskills.ca/Menno_Simons_College_Manual_Link.aspx)

IV. REFERENCE MATERIALS (recommended for further reading):

Bush, R. & Folger, J. (2004). The Promise of Mediation: The Transformative Approach to Conflict (revised edition).
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lang, M. & Taylor, A. (2000). The making of a mediator: Developing artistry in practice.
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

V. ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Class Attendance: Due to the experiential nature of this course class, attendance is essential.

25% of the final grade is based on attendance. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, students missing half a day (3 hours) will forfeit one half of their attendance mark and students missing the equivalent of a full day will forfeit all of their attendance mark. Students must provide their instructor with a written explanation of any extenuating circumstances. In consultation with the instructors, students who are going to miss part of a workshop may make arrangements to attend a different section (if there is another one presently running) and thereby not lose any attendance marks.

2. Class Participation: 25% of the final grade is based on class participation.

3. Reflective Journal: 50% of the final grade is based on a **five-topic** reflective journal, worth 10 marks per topic. Each journal topic should be **about 750 words**, double spaced, and typed. Journals are a personal reflection of the material covered in class, including some effort to integrate skill development with conflict resolution theories and concepts studied in other courses. The journal is not a formal essay requiring independent research. Rather, it is an exercise intended to show how the skills, models, and processes taught might be applied to life's experiences in a practical way. Liberal use of specific examples and scenarios will be very important. The journal for this intensive version of the workshop must be handed in as follows:

Due date.....February 4 → Note: Journals will not be accepted after this date.

LocationMenno Simons College general office & reception, 520 Portage Avenue, Room 210

(Office hours = 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the due date. Note: staff may take lunch from 12:00 to 1:30.)

Please choose your **FIVE** journal topics from the following options (**NOTE: This list of topic options may change; the final list will be announced in the class.**): ****remember, 5 only****

- 1) Pre-Mediation Interviews: Have an Interview-style conversation with someone, and journal about it (using the manuals' Interview stages). Feel free to change names to protect confidentiality.
(Example: Step 1: Venting: Mediator: "Hey Joan, what's up?" Joan: "Aww, you wouldn't believe it. My prof is crazy! He does things that just don't make sense!" Mediator: "What's he doing?..." and so on...)
Using specific examples, explain why interviews are so important prior to a mediation.
- 2) Stage one, Introduction: Describe a situation familiar to you and script some appropriate introductory remarks for a mediation. Explain the reasons behind the particular elements to be included, & why that particular approach is used.
- 3) Mediators are to be fair & even handed. List some of your most deeply-held personal values. Imagine a mediation situation where one of those values was "on the table", being debated. How might that impact your ability to mediate? How would you decide when you can't mediate due to your values or beliefs? Is "neutrality" possible?
- 4) Power Issues: What could or should you do or not do in situations where it appears that one party has more power than another, or is being coercive? How might you help with balancing or redirecting power? Use examples from life.
- 5) Justice: How well do you think the mediation process conforms to, or assist in achieving restorative justice? Use examples relevant to your own experience or from the news media.
- 6) What are your strengths and weaknesses as a potential mediator? What particular skills would you like to further develop? What attitudes or beliefs would predispose you to being comfortable/uncomfortable with being a mediator? Use examples.
- 7) Mediators are supposed to be advocates for a collaborative process, rather than advocates for either one 'side' or the other. How practically can you imagine that playing out in a mediation context? Recalling a personal conflict, discuss the difference this could make for you, were your situation to go to mediation.

VI. COURSE EVALUATION:

This is a PASS / FAIL course. To be assigned a Pass, students must earn a minimum of 65 marks. Those earning 64 marks or less will be assigned a Fail. Marks will be earned as follows:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Marks</u>
Class Attendance	25
Class Participation	25
Reflective journals...	<u>50</u>
Total	100

VII. COURSE OUTLINE:

This workshop course is designed to teach participants the essentials necessary for resolving interpersonal conflict through the use of mediation. The workshop provides participants with a working knowledge of the four stages of mediation and with numerous opportunities to practice the communication skills and other techniques needed by the mediator. The course begins with an examination of the mediation process and the role of the mediator. Experiential exercises and role plays, a simulation of real-life conflict scenarios, are used throughout the course to allow participants to practice mediation and advance their communication skills. Opportunity will be provided for reflective analysis of both conflict dynamics and personal skill development.

VIII. ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- 1. Format:** All assignments must be typed and double spaced, with 1-inch margins. Always proofread carefully, and use your word processor's "spellchecker". RECYCLE: Feel free to print on paper already used on one side.
- 2. Contacting Your instructor:** My presence on campus is very limited. If you have questions, concerns, or need to set up a meeting, please call me at my home [office = 667-4292](tel:667-4292) or [e-mail = agree@shaw.ca](mailto:agree@shaw.ca).

Students should consult the current university calendar to ensure they are familiar with the following provisions:

- 4. Final Withdrawal Date: January 21, 2011 (prior to the class starting).**
- 5. Academic Misconduct:** All material referred to in any assignment MUST be appropriately referenced. **Plagiarism is a serious offence.** (Besides, citing other authors implies you did some research!) Please see section VII of the U of W General Calendar for details.
- 6. Appeals:** Students' rights about grades and the appeal process are explained in section VII of the University of Winnipeg Calendar. We encourage all CRS students to take up any disputes regarding grades, first with your instructor (Rick Schmidt), then the CRS program coordinator, then the Menno Simons academic dean, then the U. of W. Appeals Committee. Most issues of dispute are most easily resolved at the instructor level.
- 7. Students with documented disabilities** that require academic accommodation for tests and exams and/or special accommodation during lectures are encouraged to contact the Disability Resources Coordinator (phone: 786-9178) as early as possible in the semester to discuss appropriate options.

A Note about Menno Simons College

This course is offered by Menno Simons College in affiliation with the University of Winnipeg. Menno Simons College (MSC) coordinates interdisciplinary programs and offers courses in International Development Studies and Conflict Resolution Studies in cooperation with several University of Winnipeg departments.

All courses offered by MSC are subject to University of Winnipeg Senate approval and policies, and are open to all University of Winnipeg students.

Menno Simons College was established at the University of Winnipeg in 1989 to develop programs based on the needs of our time and on the distinctive contributions that the Mennonite community can bring to these areas.

Menno Simons College is part of Canadian Mennonite University. Additional information about MSC and the MSC Student Association is available from the MSC general office, 520 Portage Avenue, Room 210.

Note: Where students are asked to work in pairs, this “Buddy Clock”, when completed, will be used to determine the various pairings throughout the course of the workshop. Instructions will follow in the workshop...

Buddy Clock ... for _____ (your name!)

Set an appointment with as many as 12 different people - one appointment for each hour on the clock. For each time slot, be sure both people record the appointment - be careful not to “double book” yourself!

