

## Group Case Study/Presentation

The class will be divided into working groups of 4-5 people for the purpose of exploring an existing conflict situation. Your research material may be drawn from various sources, such as: media coverage (local, national, or global), personal investigation and research, historical records (books, journals, films/videos, newspaper articles), and Internet sources. The conflict could involve resources, health, politics, environment, religion, ethnic groups, and/or differing world views. It must, however, be well-known - its existence should be common (public) knowledge.

Your academic tools for conflict analysis should include the concepts or theories discussed in class or found in course readings *and/or other conflict resolution literature*. These could include, but are not limited to the two conflict assessment guides provided by Wilmot & Hocker at the end of their 6<sup>th</sup> chapter, Adam Curle's "*Progression of Conflict*", Lederach's ideas of structure and process, Boulding's ideas about power, Vellacott or King on non-violence, Turpin's thoughts on Women and war, Sinclair's thinking about the Canadian justice system and aboriginal people, or any other theories in your course text and reader.

Groups are required to provide the class with a handout that summarizes the important aspects of the conflict they present. Each group will explore a different conflict, except where two groups wish to pursue the same conflict from two different perspectives.

**Examples of Conflict Case Studies:** Canada-USA trade disputes (mad cow problems, softwood lumber, wheat), same-sex marriage, smoking bans, legalizing marijuana, abortion, the ongoing response to 9/11, globalization of world trade, Genocide in Sudan, Independence for Tibet or Chechnya, genetically-modified food, Recent Native Land Claim Settlements, Canada's response to international environmental concerns, Israeli-Palestinian struggle, privatization of Canadian health care, hydro power development (in Manitoba, China, or elsewhere) ...and so on!

### Goals of Assignment:

- To link theory to practice, through the study of a specific conflict.
- To develop the oral/verbal skills required in a shared learning experience.
- To practice constructive conflict resolution in a collaborative work group.

**Presentations** are worth 20% of the total marks for this class. Marking is based on 3 areas of evaluation:

- **Research & Description of the Conflict:** I will be looking for evidence of a thorough understanding of the conflict, including the issues of concern, the various parties' interests, the different perspectives and positions represented, the development/evolution of the conflict, and who the "stakeholders" (those who are involved or will be impacted by the outcome) are.
- **Analysis: Interpretation & Evaluation, according to Conflict Resolution Theory:** What theories speak to the situation? Evaluate the state of the relationship between the different "sides" - how did the players get to the state their in? What course of action or approach would you recommend, based on the theories found in the course material or in other conflict resolution literature? Use your academic tools to interpret your findings and observations, and create a "report card" for how well the conflict is being managed by the parties. **\*\* NOTE: Analysis is the core of the assignment!**
- **Presentation:** Were you informative? Did you communicate with clarity? Were you engaging - did you connect well with your audience? Were you able to make your presentation relevant to your audience, or are they thinking, "Who cares?" Did you encourage interaction or questions, during or after your presentation? Did you provide helpful handout material?

## Important Dates

**Proposal Interview:** On or before the **proposal due date shown in your syllabus**, I want to see and discuss your written proposal (1-2 pages) for your group case study. This proposal should outline:

1)Description of the Conflict:

What is it about, who is involved, when and where, why is there a conflict.

2)Research:

What are your information sources? What methods will you use? (such as hunting down newspaper stories, interviews, books on the subject, Internet search, special interest groups and organizations)

- be specific!

3)Presentation Style:

Will you do a verbal report, role play, panel discussion, positional debate, use video or sound clips, a dramatic simulation, or *some combination of the above*? What kind of handouts might be helpful?

(Be sure to tell me what equipment will you need, in advance!!)

The purpose of the proposal is to:

- Allow me to approve your project.
- Address any questions or concerns you have.
- Brainstorm for creative ideas on how to accomplish your task.
- Discover if you will need to make photocopies (handouts?), or acquire audio-visual equipment?
- Assign a presentation date, as per below. First come, first served.

**Presentations** will take place **on the two dates shown in your syllabus**.

There will be three presentations per class - six in total. Each group will have up to a maximum of **40 minutes** (no more!) to present their work, after which you will be ruthlessly cut off!! There will be a 10 minute opportunity for class comments/feedback/discussion after each presentation, which I will facilitate.

**NOTE:** Each presentation will be evaluated on a group basis, with each member of the group receiving the same mark.

**WARNING:** You must **AVOID getting bogged down in the issues**. Rather than taking sides, you must take an "outsider's" perspective. Your job is to represent all sides as impartially as you can. If you have questions or concerns, let's talk.

**\*\*\* TAKE CAREFUL NOTE OF THE EVALUATION METHOD SHEET \*\*\***

