

MENNO SIMONS COLLEGE
&
THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION STUDIES

CRS-1200/6-051

Course Syllabus

Term	Fall/Winter 2010-2011	Instructor	Rick Schmidt, AIC, BSA., MA(CR)
Lecture Dates	Sept. 14, 2010 - April 5, 2011 (see pages 5 & 6)	Office	*by arrangement*
Class Time	Tuesday, 6:00 - 9:00 pm.	Office hours	after class, or by request
Class Room	1MS16, 520 Portage Avenue, 1 st floor	Phone →	7 days/week... 667-4292 (home office)
Exam, mid-term	Due December 14 (“take home” exam)	E-mail	agree@shaw.ca
Exam, final	NONE (instead, a research paper)	Class web page ...	rickschmidt.net/introtocrs.html

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES: This course is designed to develop an understanding of the nature of human conflict, of responses to conflict, and of models for constructive ways to deal with human conflict between individuals, groups and nations. The themes of communication, power, violence versus non-violent action, creative dimensions of conflict, intervention (e.g. mediation & individual coaching), and resolution are examined from an inter-disciplinary perspective. Students are asked to examine their personal experience and understanding of conflict and its resolution in light of the concepts, models, and theories explored in this course – *there needs to be an interchange between theory and practise.*

II. TEACHING METHODS: This course will involve lecture and discussion, using seminar or workshop styles where possible. One of the goals is to work as a learning community. Opportunities will be provided for simulation exercises, small group interaction and full class discussion. Additional dimensions will be added through videos, guests, a field assignment and a group project. *It is expected that students will do considerable reading and reflection as preparation for class.*

III. REQUIRED READING LIST: (all items should be available at ‘Beyond Words’, the University of Winnipeg Bookstore)

Menno Simons College (Ed.). (2010). Introduction to conflict resolution studies: Custom edition for menno simons college (11th ed.). Winnipeg: Pearson Learning Solutions ** *We will call this the “Course Reader” (CR)*

Tolan, Sandy. (2007). The Lemon Tree: An Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing. ISBN: 1596913436

Wilmot, W. & Hocker, J. (2010). Interpersonal conflict (8th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Notes regarding texts and required or recommended reading:

- A “Tentative Course Outline and Reading Guide” has been attached (see p. 5 & 6) to assist you in knowing what material to read in preparation for class. Further direction will be given as the course unfolds.
- Additional handouts and articles may be distributed with corresponding topics of inquiry. They’ll be posted on the class web page.

IV. ASSIGNMENTS: These are the course requirements. **NOTE: Due dates are all listed in part V (the next section).**

1. Class Participation will be an important element of this interactive course. Therefore consistent class attendance is required. Appropriate participation will involve both active listening and effective speaking skills. Students are invited to share their learning experiences with each other, and enter into respectful dialogue together. A big challenge is to strike a healthy balance between letting others be heard, and being heard ourselves. This mark will be *derived from your presence in the class*.

Value: 5%

2. Field Interview: Arrange to interview a family member or friend for whom resolving conflict is a big part of the work they do (e.g. workplace, business, non-profit, church, school). Potential individuals could include human resource managers or consultants, teachers or school principals, religious leaders, mediators, arbitrators, police officers, lawyers, marriage counsellors, supervisors or business owners. Learn how your subject understands, approaches, and responds to conflict with colleagues, clients, the boss, and/or those who report to her/him. What are his/her beliefs and assumptions about conflict (conscious or unconscious)? What styles or tactics are used/not used? How do relational and identity goals figure in? Ask for specific stories and examples, and ask questions that will uncover the underlying thinking and motivations for what she/he does.

Write a report on your interview. In a *short* introduction, *briefly* describe the person and her/his working context. Then, in one to three sentences, advise the reader of your purpose - what, specifically, are you setting out to do? Your paper should include a description of what your interviewee has told you. You should interpret and evaluate what you have heard, using the course readings and class discussions as your "theoretical tools". What does this person do well? Where are they less effective? Remember to back up your assertions with convincing evidence or arguments. Avoid sweeping statements like "Sara is a good listener" unless you can clearly show why you think so! Use specific examples, and be careful to relate them to the theories and concepts you have learned thus far. (~1400 words) Value: 10%

3. Personal Praxis Exercise: This assignment is intended to help you make practical connections between academic theory and your life. Describe and evaluate how you personally understand and respond to interpersonal conflict *between yourself and others*, using any of the theories or ideas presented in chapters 1 - 6 of Wilmot & Hocker, and CR articles such as Keashley & Warters: "Working it Out", and Deutsch: Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice. Include something about your view of (orientation to), and use of, power. Be careful to use specific incidents to illustrate your points.

And here's a special part of this assignment: ask someone who *knows you well* to share her/his assessment of how *you* approach and respond to conflict between yourself and others. (You may have to explain a bit of the theory, or a model or two from the class, just to give your assessor language she/he can use.) What was the learning for you? What do you need to work at doing differently? Use the course concepts as tools to answer these questions. (This will be an excellent opportunity to practice effective listening with an open mind!) (~1400 words) Value: 10%

4. 1st Term Exam: an analysis of the book "The Lemon Tree": This take-home exam will be handed out on the last class of the first half of the course (class #12). It will be based on course learning to date; the questions will constitute a conflict analysis of elements in the book The Lemon Tree. For the due date, see section V. Value: 20%

5. Conflict Analysis of the Movie Romero: On the date shown in section V. of this syllabus, the movie ROMERO will be shown. Write a conflict analysis of the way Romero responds to the situations he faces, as his understanding grows. The Course Reader has 4 articles: King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"; King's "The Power of Nonviolence"; Ackerman & Duval's "The American South: Campaign for Civil Rights", and Ghandi's "From Passive Resistance to Direct Action on Satyagraha" - focus your analysis on comparing Romero's changing beliefs & personal struggles around using violence or non-violence in response to oppression to what two of these articles has to say. If you wish, you may also relate Adam Curle's "Progression of Conflict" (CP: Lederach's "The Long View of Conflict") to the story. As always, back up your statements with convincing evidence or argument, using specific incidents or quotes as examples wherever possible.

**** NOTE: Be sure to read the articles BEFORE seeing the movie!** (~1400 words) Value: 10%

6. Group Case Study/Presentation: You will be placed in working teams of 3-5 people for the purpose of exploring an existing conflict situation. **** NOTE: *Handouts will follow, detailing this assignment and the method of evaluation.*** **** Value: 20%**

7. A Research Essay of 2600-3000 words on a CRS topic of your choice will be a key opportunity to pursue your specific area of interest. **** NOTE: *Please refer to the special instructions handout to follow.*** **** Value: 25%**

V. COURSE EVALUATION:

1. Distribution of course credits and due dates:

<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>DUE DATE</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Class Participation.....	every class.....	5%
Field Interview.....	October 26 (class #7).....	10%
Personal Praxis Exercise.....	November 9 (class #9).....	10%
First-term Exam, on 'The Lemon Tree'....	December 14.....	20%
Movie Analysis		
View 'Romero' Movie in class	February 8 (class #17)	
Paper due.....	February 15 (class #18).....	10%
Group Presentation		
proposal.....	January 26 (class #16).....	req'd for credit
presentation.....	March 8 or 15 (class #20 or 21).....	20%
Research Project		
proposal.....	February 8 (class #17)	
finished paper.....	April 5 (final class).....	25%
	Grade Total =	100%



2. Conflict Resolution Studies courses are evaluated on the following basis:

<u>% Scores</u>	<u>Grades</u>
90 - 100	A+
85 - 89	A
80 - 84	A-
75 - 79	B+
70 - 74	B
65 - 69	C+
60 - 64	C
50 - 59	D (marginal pass)
below 50	F (failure)

Note: Letter grades will be applied in keeping with the standards and policies of the University of Winnipeg. Final grades are awarded by Senate; thus, letter grade cut-offs can be subject to revision.

VI. ADDITIONAL NOTES:

1. Due Dates: Assignments are due as scheduled. **Marks will be deducted for lateness, at a rate of 10% off for every calendar day past the due date.** You may renegotiate due dates two weeks in advance if you anticipate scheduling conflicts with other courses/activities. Written assignments are due IN CLASS (hard copy) on the prescribed date; unless alternative arrangements have been made *in advance*.

2. One Re-write: Each student will have the option of re-writing one written assignment, except for the final paper or any exams.

3. Academic Writing Format:

Clear Purpose: All academic work should have an easily-identifiable purpose. In the introduction to every written assignment (except exams), please include a purpose statement (typically, 1-3 sentences), so that what you are setting out to do, and how it will be done, can be clearly and easily identified. A thesis statement is very helpful in setting out a clear purpose, but may not be enough by itself. Leave no room for doubt.

All assignments must be submitted in hard copy, typed, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins. Proofread carefully - "spellcheckers" can't catch everything, and you don't want poor grammar to get in the way of a good paper.

Double-sided printing, or using 'good-one-side' paper is environmentally preferred and is encouraged!

continued...

Tentative Course Outline and Reading Guide → 1st Term ← (subject to change)

(NOTE: CR = Course Reader, WH = Wilmot & Hocker)

Class #	Date	Description
1	Sept. 14	Introductions, purpose, overview of course (WH1, CR: Girard) - Class participation explained, origins of conflict resolution - Images & Metaphors of conflict, conflict cycle
2	Sept. 21	Beliefs and assumptions about conflict (helpful and unhelpful) (WH1&2) - What is conflict?, Conflict: Danger and Opportunity, - Destructive & Constructive Destructive Patterns of Conflict (WH2; CR: Deutsch) - Gender and Conflict (WH1)
3	Sept. 28	Culture & Conflict Response (WH1, CR: Ross) - "Little Injustices" (video) - Laura Nader looks at the law and culture
4	Oct. 5	Gender and Conflict (CR: Kolb; recommended: Tannen, Deborah: "You Just Don't Understand") - Constructive patterns of Conflict, dimensions of cooperation - Effective Listening (Mediation Services Manual) - Questioning
5	Oct. 12	Effective Listing Continued (Mediation Services Manual) - Questioning - part 2 - Paraphrasing - Exercise: Controversial Issues Circle
6	Oct. 19	Goals in Conflict situations (WH3, Handouts and special diagram) - Goals Analysis Exercise Introduction to Styles and Tactics (WH 5); - "Barking Dog in the Neighborhood" game and/or Style inventory exercise
7	Oct. 26	Effective Speaking (Mediation Services Manual) - "I" Messages, use of language Power: (WH4, CR: Kenneth Boulding's "The Nature of Power") - definitions of, Images & differing views of power, - nature of relational power, categories & currencies of power, 3 faces of power
8	Nov. 2	Power & Conflict: (WH4; recommended: Ury, Bret, & Goldberg's "Breaking the Impasse") - "3 Approaches to Conflict", distressed & effective systems
9	Nov. 9	Power - continued - Power imbalance, Power & Race; Racism - "Color of Fear" (video), debrief: racism, power, personal versus structural violence
10	Nov. 16	Conflict Assessment (read WH chapt. 6, CR: Lederach "From Issues to Systems") - Systems theory, nested paradigm of conflict, Conflict Patterns - Conflict Assessment Guides (WH6)
11	Nov. 23	Conflict Assessment - continued - Assessment tools applied to the book "The Lemon Tree" Optional: Special Guest Lecturer?: details to follow
12	Nov. 30	Options: "Johari's Window" & Defensiveness (PDF handout), and/or "The Value of a Good Apology" Review of First Term, class response & reflections TAKE-HOME EXAM: handed out & explained Group Assignments for the Group Presentation Project *** Optional: Last class of first half! Students may bring food or drink to share with class ***
	Dec. 14	End-of-first-half Exam DUE date

Tentative Course Outline and Reading Guide → 2nd Term ← (subject to change)

(NOTE: CR = Course Reader, WH = Wilmot & Hocker)

Class #	Date	Description
13	Jan. 11	Negotiation (WH7 & handouts; recommended: Fisher & Ury “Getting to Yes” and “Getting past No”) - Competitive versus collaborative negotiation - Two models for collaborative negotiation - Positions versus Interests; “Principled Negotiation”
14	Jan. 18	Negotiation Continued...
15	Jan. 25	Guest Lecturer - details to be determined Group Projects - class time given for planning & preparation (½ the class)
16	Feb. 1	Violence & Non-violence (CR: see the section on VIOLENCE and the section on NON-VIOLENCE) Models for understanding conflict within and between groups - read Adam Curle’s “Progression of Violence”, in CR: LEDERACH’s “The long View of Conflict” - read in the ‘NON-VIOLENCE’ section in your CR: GANDHI: From Passive Resistance to Direct Action; KING: Letter from a Birmingham jail; KING: The Power of Nonviolence; ACKERMAN & DUVAL: The American South: Campaign for Civil Rights → very important reading prior to next week’s class
17	Feb. 8	Violence & Non-violence continued... → <i>don’t miss this class!</i> - Movie “Romero”: You will write a response paper on this movie, relating Romero to any or all of the articles listed in last week’s list of readings (above)
18	Feb. 15	Two Paradigms of Justice: Restorative Versus Retributive (CR: Zehr, handout) - Videos: “Hollow Water” and/or “Restorative Justice” Power of Apologies (optional) ** READING WEEK ** February 15-20
19	March 1	Contemporary large-scale conflict (CR: Lederach’s “Contemporary Armed Conflict”, CR: Lederach: “Quo Vadis?”, CR: Klare,) Finding constructive responses to large-scale conflict (CR: Lederach “Remember and Change”) Optional: Reconciliation (handout: Lederach’s “The Meeting Place”) Contemporary large-scale conflict (continued)
20	March 8	Group Project Presentations - 1st day of presentations
21	March 15	Group Project Presentations - 2 nd day of presentations
22	March 22	Perspectives (CR: Hall & Noguchi) - The “Intent-Action-Effect” Phenomenon Purposeful listening - the analytical ear of the third party
23	March 29	Third party intervention - The ‘Coaching for Resolution’ Model, role plays - Instructor and Course Evaluations
24	April 5	Third party intervention (contd.) - Mediation model - Videos: mediation role plays Course summary and review, closing reflections Due: Research Paper ** Optional: Last class! Students may bring food or drink to share with class **