

CANADIAN SCHOOL OF PEACEBUILDING CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

Interpersonal Mediation in Your Community: Frameworks, Skills and Presence

PCTS-2190/3

SESSION II – JUNE 13-17, 2011

Course Syllabus

INSTRUCTORS: David Dyck

TIMES: SESSION I – JUNE 13-17, 2011, 9am-5pm

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is offered in partnership with Resolution Skills Centre, the training division of Mediation Services.

This course explores the frameworks, skills, and personal qualities needed to effectively mediate between people in conflict. It is specifically designed for those students who have a personal stake in the conflicts they mediate and who may be mediating between people they know well. Developing a clear understanding of mediation theories and skills (knowing and doing) are essential and will form the backbone of the course. However, we will also examine the role that the mediator's presence and self-awareness play in building peace and explore how to cultivate this element through attention to one's inner life. In so doing, we recognize that who we are is at least as important as what we know or what we can do.

The role that culture and worldview play in how the mediator defines and approaches her/his task and some of the varying applications of mediation in the contemporary Canadian context will also be explored. To this end, experienced practitioners who use different forms of mediation in different contexts (e.g. in schools, workplaces, churches, community development, criminal justice) will join us at various points to share what they do and why they do it. At the same time, an attempt will be made to articulate a more universal set of underlying principles that might link mediators across differing cultural and institutional contexts. Participants will be provided with multiple opportunities to practically flesh out what those principles mean for their particular community in the context of practical simulations. The course will be taught in a workshop format with significant time devoted to interactive activities and small group exercises. The overall goal is for you to gain a working knowledge of the stages of a particular mediation model and advance your skills as a third-party helper to others in conflict.

The course is offered either for training or for 3 hours of academic credit.

II. TEACHING METHODS AND OBJECTIVES: As noted above, we will place primary emphasis on experiential learning. Micro skills essential will be developed through interactive exercises. Brief presentations will set the context for applying both theory and skills in mediation simulations. Students will be challenged with practical scenarios, followed by debriefing and group discussion designed to make clear connections to real life.

III. REQUIRED READINGS & MATERIALS LIST:

Mediation Services. Mediation Skills for Leaders, training manual (2011)

Note #1: The manual is available at http://resolutionskills.ca/training_manuals.aspx - click on the link.).

Note #2: All students are responsible for printing their own copy of the manual and bringing it to class.

IV. REFERENCE MATERIALS (recommended for further reading):

- Bowling, Daniel & David Hoffman (2003). Bringing Peace into the Room: How the Personal Qualities of the Mediator Impact the Process of Conflict Resolution. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bush, R. & J. Folger (2004). The Promise of Mediation: The Transformative Approach to Conflict (revised edition). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Chodron, Pema (2001). The Wisdom of No Escape: And the Path of Loving Kindness. Boston: Shambhala Publications.
- Hollis, James (2008). Why Good People Do Bad Things: Understanding Our Darker Selves. New York, New York: Gotham Books.
- Lang, M. & Taylor, A. (2000). The Making of a Mediator: Developing Artistry in Practice. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Lederach, John Paul (1995). Preparing for Peace. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Lederach, John Paul (1999). Journey Toward Reconciliation. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press.
- Riso, Richard & Russ Hudson (1999). The Wisdom of the Enneagram: The Complete Guide to Psychological & Spiritual Growth for the Nine Personality Types. Toronto, New York: Bantam Books.
- Schwartz, Richard C. (2001). Introduction to the Internal Family Systems Model. Oak Park, IL: Trailheads Publications.
- Schwartz, Richard C. (2008). You Are the One You've Been Waiting For. Oak Park, IL: Trailheads Publications.
- Zehr, Howard (2003). The Little Book of Restorative Justice. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

V. ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Class Attendance:** Due to the experiential nature of this course class, attendance is essential. **20%** 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.
2. **Class Participation:** **20%** of the final grade is based on class participation.
3. **Book Review – DUE on July 17, 2011:** **20%** of the final grade is based on a book review. Your assignment is to write a 2-4 page double-spaced paper on a book of your choosing from the recommended reading list. Within the book review, you should:
 - Summarize the major themes and arguments of the author (*one-half to one full page*);
 - Critically assess those arguments, highlighting strengths and weaknesses (*one-half to one full page*);
 - Outline no fewer than 2 specific applications of the concepts of the book to the material and skills we covered in class. That is, you need to specifically delineate how the material in the book you have read relates to (e.g. challenges, reinforces, &/or builds on) the specific frameworks and skills you learned in class (*one to two pages*).

3. Reflective Journal – DUE on July 21, 2011: 40% of the final grade is based on a **four-topic** reflective journal, worth 10 marks for each topic. Each journal topic should be 2 pages in length (500 words), double spaced, and typed (8-pages for the entire journal). The journal should be a personal reflection on the material covered in class, including some effort to integrate skill development and the concepts *as discussed in class* with concrete examples from your personal life and/or work. The journal is **not a formal essay** requiring independent research. Rather, it is an exercise intended to allow the student to demonstrate how the skills, models, and processes taught might be applied to your life 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:

Please choose your **FOUR journal topics** from the following **eight options** (**NOTE:** This list of possible topic options may change somewhat to reflect possible changes in the specific topics covered as the course unfolds over the 5 days.):

1) Interviews/Case Development: 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: "Arrrgh, you wouldn't believe it. My prof is crazy! He's got this ridiculous journal assignment!" Mediator: "Oh, yeah?..." and so on...)

2) Reflections on a Guest Mediator Presenter: Choose one of the guest presenters from class to focus on. Why did you choose this particular person/practitioner? What about her/him did you find inspiring or interesting? Are they a professional, para-professional, or life-styler? (or all 3)? Insider-partial or outsider-neutral? How does their work and approach resonate or intersect with your own interests, goals, or situation? What "take-away" learnings or insights that they offered can you apply to your own life and how?

3) Mediator Bias, Neutrality (being fair & even handed): When would you find this more difficult? Are there situations that you personally would not or could not fairly mediate? What could you do to keep yourself from becoming biased for or against one party? Is complete neutrality possible? Connect your discussion to what you heard in class on this topic and explain with examples relevant to your own experience.

4) Power Issues: How might you, as a mediator, assess power in an interpersonal conflict situation? What are some specific sources or markers of power? What could you do as a mediator in situations where it appears that one party has more power and might be using it in coercive ways? Can you work at balancing power? If so, how? Again, use examples relevant to your own experience and relate your discussion to what we discussed in class.

5) The Strengths & Limits of Mediation: What are the strengths or weakness of using mediation as an intervention in interpersonal conflict? Where do you think it would be most effective and makes a lot of sense? What about situations where it might be ineffective, not make sense, or even be dangerous? Provide examples relevant to your own experience.

6) Justice: How do you understand the relationship between mediation and justice? What does justice have to do with interpersonal conflict resolution? How much potential do you believe mediation has in terms of facilitating the achievement of justice (restorative or otherwise)? Illustrate with examples and relate your discussion to what you heard in class.

7) Personal Assessment: What attitudes, beliefs, experiences, or skills did you have prior to this course that would predispose you to being effective and comfortable as a mediator? (What are your natural strengths?) What previous attitudes, habits, or roles might get in the way of you serving as an effective mediator? (What are your potential weaknesses?) What particular skills or attributes would you like to further develop? Use examples.

8) Potential Application to a Personal Situation: Mediators are supposed to be advocates for a collaborative process, rather than advocates for either one "side" or the other. Recalling a past or current personal conflict, discuss what practical difference having an advocate for collaborative process (i.e. a mediator) might make for you were your situation to go to mediation.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS & DEADLINES:

<u>Assignment:</u>	<u>Due Date:</u>	<u>Value:</u>
1. Class Attendance	Throughout June 13-17/11	20%
2. Class Participation	Throughout June 13-17/11	20%
3. Book Review	July 17/11	20%
4. Reflective Journal	July 21/11	40%

VII. EVALUATION

Note: Canadian Mennonite University Academic Office will mail marks to students in September. It is the responsibility of the instructor and the student to arrange how to return marked papers/projects to the students.

With respect to the writing assignments, I expect you to *follow the guidelines* of the assignment as noted in this syllabus and to discuss deviations from them with me before turning it in. In evaluating your work, *quality* is more important than quantity. I appreciate creativity, clear expression of ideas, evidence of engagement with reading and class sessions, and topics that are of real interest and value to you.

In your papers, be sure to avoid any form of *plagiarism*. If you have doubts about what is appropriate, a useful website is <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/>. Plagiarism is a serious issue and will result in grade reduction or action by the university (see university policy on this).

Good communication skills are essential for justice and peacebuilding work. Students will be expected to communicate knowledgeably, clearly, effectively, concisely and persuasively. All written work should reflect sincere engagement and be very well-organized.

Each completed assignment will be given a numerical grade (according to its value toward the final grade) and the corresponding letter grade. The final mark for each student is determined by the sum total of all numerical grades, which is then assigned a letter grade according to the scale below.

Late Assignments

Handing an assignment late should be arranged with the instructor before the due date for the assignment. If the due date is already past, marks will be deducted for the papers at a rate of 5 points per calendar day. The Canadian School of Peacebuilding has set **Aug 8th, 2011** as the very last day that students can hand work into instructors. This is so grading can be completed and shared with students as quickly as possible.

Letter Grade/Percentage Scale

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Grade Points</u>	<u>Descriptor</u>
A+	95-100	4.5	Exceptional
A	88-94	4	Excellent
B+	81-87	3.5	Very Good
B	74-80	3	Good
C+	67-73	2.5	Satisfactory
C	60-67	2	Adequate
D	50-59	1	Marginal
F	0-49		Failure

Criteria	A - Excellent	B - Competent	C - Below Expectations
CONTENT (quality of the information/ ideas and sources/ examples/ illustrations used to support them)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has clarity of purpose - has depth of content - displays dynamic insight or compelling originality of thought -demonstrates significant depth & breadth of understanding of class content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has clarity of purpose - has substantial information and sufficient support - contains some originality of thought or insight -demonstrates a basic grasp of class content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has clarity of purpose -lacks depth of content and may depend on generalities or the commonplace - has little originality of thought -demonstrates little grasp of class content
STRUCTURE (logical order or sequence of the writing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is coherent and logically developed -uses very effective transitions -arguments are easy to follow throughout paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is coherent and logically developed -uses smooth transitions -arguments are relatively easy to follow through most of paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is coherent and logically (but not fully) developed -has some awkward transitions -arguments are difficult to follow
CONVENTIONS (appearance of the writing: sentence structure, usage, mechanics, documentation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has virtually no errors of conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has minimal errors of conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is understandable <u>but</u> has noticeable problems of sentence structure, usage, mechanics or documentation
STYLE (personality of the writing: word choice, sentence variety, voice, attention to audience)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is concise, eloquent and rhetorically effective -has nicely varied sentence structure -is engaging throughout and enjoyable to read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - displays concern for careful expression -has some variation in sentence structure -is generally enjoyable to read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has some personality <u>but</u> lacks imagination and may be stilted and may rely on clichés -has little variation in sentence structure -is not very interesting to read

NOTE: The CMU *Student Handbook* is a useful guide for further information on CMU policies regarding grades, academic misconduct, and appeals. Grades are not final until vetted and approved by the Dean's Office.

FINAL DATE FOR WITHDRAWAL

Final date to withdraw from this course without academic penalty is **June 10, 2011**.

VIII. ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- 1. Format:** All assignments must be typed and double-spaced, with 1-inch margins. Always proofread carefully, and use your computer's spellchecker. RECYCLE: Feel free to print on paper already used on one side.
- 2. Contacting Your instructor:** My presence on campus is *extremely* limited. If you have questions, concerns, or need to set up a meeting, please call me at my home office = 775-7238 or e-mail = ddyck@fscanada.org.

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

- 3. Appeals:** Students' rights about grades and the appeal process are explained in CMU materials. We encourage all students to take up any disputes regarding grades, first with your instructor (David Dyck), then the CSOP program coordinator, then the CMU academic dean, then the Appeals Committee. Most issues of dispute are most easily resolved at the instructor level.
- 4. Disabilities:** Students with documented disabilities that require academic accommodation for tests and exams and / or special accommodation during lectures are encouraged to contact the CSOP Program Coordinators ahead of time to discuss appropriate options.

