

Peace and Conflict Studies (PCST) 320: Conflict Resolution
Spring 2006

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Course Objectives

1. An examination and understanding of the basic conflict resolution literature.
2. An examination of and practice in using processes critical to success in conflict settlements.
3. An integration of several disciplines (anthropology, communication studies, economics, history, peace studies, political science, psychology, and sociology) in the study of conflict and its resolution.
4. An increase in the understanding of personal conflicts.
5. An increase in the repertoire of ways to deal with conflict.
6. An increased ability to effectively handle personal conflicts.
7. A better understanding of several human groups as a means to overcome barriers between persons.
8. An increased ability to help others reconcile their differences.
9. A better understanding of interpersonal violence and structural/institutionalized violence.
10. An increased understanding of and appreciation for the use of nonviolent methods in working with conflict and/or justice issues.

Course Texts

1. Roger Fisher and William Ury. Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991.
2. William Ury. Getting Past No: Negotiating Your Way From Confrontation to Cooperation. Bantam Books, 1993.

Course Content

There will be a wide variety of topics studied, including: the differences between conflict resolution, conflict management, and conflict transformation; the system view vs. the actor view of conflict; the differences between negotiation, conciliation, mediation, arbitration, and litigation; the importance of early experiences; triggering events; safely releasing negative feelings; the effects of hurt and distress on the mind; prejudice reduction and celebrating diversity; internalized oppression; the widespread effects of adultism and classism; the importance of listening; conflict styles; differences in perception; conflict intersystems; deindividuation; enemy-making; I-messages; confronting/carefronting; finding common ground; win/win negotiation; using interests rather than positions; forgiveness; humor; how guns and other technology have changed conflict resolution; nonviolence and nonviolence training; etc.

In the discussion of readings, each person will get a chance to speak. We will listen with respect as we take turns sharing our thinking. Each person's ideas are important because of the distinctive perspective s/he brings to the topic. We will strive to empower each other to handle conflicts in the world.

Course Requirements

The reading and the writing assignments must be done and handed in on schedule.

1. Writing assignments - there will be weekly two-page reaction papers, in each of which 6-7 ideas from the reading will be analyzed - 40% of the final grade.
2. Class participation - it is important to be an active class participant in order to learn this material - 20% of the final grade. An excused class absence might be able to be made up.
3. A ten-page conflict resolution autobiography (will be explained in detail in class) - 20% of the final grade.
4. Convocation reaction papers and Celebrating Diversity Workshop participation - 20% of the final grade.

Bibliography

Roger Fisher and William Ury, Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In, 1991.

Bob Gross, Mediating Interpersonal Conflict, 2003.

Deborah Kolb, Everyday Negotiation: Navigating the Hidden Agendas in Bargaining, 2003.

Jeffrey Kottler, Beyond Blame: A New Way of Resolving Conflicts in Relationships, 1994.

Phyllis Beck Kritek, Negotiating at an Uneven Table: Developing Moral Courage in Resolving Our Conflicts, 2002.

Michelle LeBaron, Bridging Troubled Waters: Conflict Resolution From the Heart, 2002.

Bernard Mayer, The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution: A Practitioner's Guide, 2000.

Alison Taylor, The Handbook of Family Dispute Resolution. 2002.

Timothy Ursiny, The Coward's Guide to Conflict: Empowering Solutions for Those Who Would Rather Run Than Fight, 2003.

William Ury, Getting Past No: Negotiating Your Way From Confrontation to Cooperation, 1993.

William Wilmot and Joyce Hocker, Interpersonal Conflict, 2001.