

NCLC 305: Conflict Resolution and Transformation (6 credits)
Spring 2014
Wednesday & Friday, 10:30am - 1:10pm
Room: Krug Hall 19

Instructor: Alex Cromwell

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Office hours by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is for students to develop a holistic understanding of conflict and of how and why it occurs from the intrapersonal level to the international level. Each one of us has the capacity to become better at dealing with the conflicts that we become entrenched in and to realize our own role in perpetuating these conflicts. In this course we will look deep into ourselves to find what is at our core and examine how this affects our relationships with others and with the world around us. The hope is that the insights that we gain through this exploration will empower us to transform the conflicts that we experience in our day-to-day lives, and contribute to developing more peaceful communities and societies.

In this class we will also be intentional about developing practical skills to use in resolving conflicts, as well as critical lenses to prevent us from superficial resolutions that do not fully address issues. We will not only explore the skills involved in conflict transformation but we will also look at the art of peacebuilding, especially as it relates to creativity and the ability to envision a completely new relationship between enemies. We will explicitly connect to this to the role that we can play as individuals in global conflicts.

Learning Objectives

- Explore multiple frameworks aimed at deepening our understanding of conflict
- Appreciate the connection between understanding conflict and finding meaningful resolutions that address the needs of both parties
- Recognize the need for conflict transformation as a means of changing conflict dynamics and moving towards a positive future
- Develop skills for transforming conflicts in our own lives
- Practice listening, assertion, and conflict resolution skills
- Explore the importance of creativity and imagination in facilitating positive social change—individually and globally
- Develop and refine competencies in communication, critical thinking, group collaboration, global understanding, and well-being

REQUIRED TEXTS (AVAILABLE IN BOOKSTORE)

Lederach, John Paul. (2003). *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*. PA: Intercourse.

REQUIRED ARTICLES/BOOK CHAPTERS (ON BLACKBOARD)

Albom, Mitch. (1997). *Tuesdays with Morrie*. New York: Doubleday.
(excerpts)

Andreas, Mark. (2011). *Sweet Fruit from the Bitter Tree: 61 Stories of Creative and Compassionate Ways out of Conflict*. Boulder, CO: Real People Press. (excerpts).

The Arbinger Institute. (2006). *The Anatomy of Peace: Resolving the Heart of Conflict*, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. (Ch. 5, 10, 22)

Bayda, Ezra. (2006). *The Path to Forgiveness in Mindful Politics*, ed. Melvin McLeod. Somerville: Wisdom Publications. (pp 171-180)

Bolton, R. (1986). *People Skills: How to Assert Yourself, Listen to Others, and Resolve Conflicts*. (excerpts)

Dugan, M. (1996). A nested theory of conflict. *A Leadership Journal: Women in Leadership-Sharing the Vision*, 1, 9-19.

Gopin, Marc, *Healing the Heart of Conflict: 8 Crucial Steps for Making Peace with Yourself and Others*. New York: Rodale Inc. 2004. (Ch. 1)

Gopin, M. (2009). *To make the earth whole: The art of citizen diplomacy in an age of religious militancy*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc. (Ch. 3)

Lederach, John Paul. (2005). *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace*. New York: Oxford University Press. (excerpts)

Nhat Hanh, Thich. (2006). "We Have the Compassion and Understanding Necessary to Heal the World," in *Mindful Politics*, ed. Melvin McLeod. Somerville: Wisdom Publications. pp. 128-138.

Rosenberg, Marshal. (1999). *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Compassion*. Encinitas, CA: Puddledancer Press. (Ch. 2 & Ch.3)

Stone, Douglas, Bruce Patton and Sheila Heen. (1999). *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most*. New York: Viking. (Introduction & Ch. 1)

Wiesenthal, Simon. (1997). *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness*. New York: Schocken Books Inc. (summary, Responses by the Dalai Lama, Herbert Marcuse, Robert Coles, Desmond Tutu)

Wilmot, William W. and Joyce L. Hocker. (2011). *Interpersonal Conflict*, 8th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill. (pp. 11-19, 70-83, & 271-275)

Winslade, John and Monk, G. *Narrative Mediation: A New Approach to Conflict Resolution*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 2000. (Ch. 1)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

COURSE ASSESSMENT:

• Participation	100 points
• Workshop participation	150 points
• 1st Assignment: Journaling	150 points
• 2nd Assignment: Group Presentation	200 points
• 3rd Assignment: Working with Conflict	200 points
• 4th Assignment: Personal essay	200 points
Total:	1000 points

Participation = 100 points. Collaborative learning is an important feature of New Century College learning communities. Students are expected to attend class, to participate actively and responsibly, to hand in all assignments when due, and to support other students in the learning process. Each student will be an active learner, coming fully prepared to engage in that enterprise by raising questions and suggesting answers or tracks to follow in search of answers. Students are expected to read and be prepared to discuss the assigned texts. Note-taking is very important, and students are expected to take effective notes. There may be various in-class assignments, which may be graded as a component of participation. The instructor will evaluate students for individual contributions to our collective enterprise.

Workshops = 150 points. On Fridays, the course will take the form of a workshop. There will be ten workshops during the semester and you will receive 15 points for each you attend. These workshops will be technology-free (except for days when we record role plays), so make sure you bring paper.

1st Assignment: Journaling = 150 points. For 12 weeks, you will be given a project or question to complete each week. You will write a 500-word journal entry in response to a questions/project (one single-spaced or two double-spaced pages). These journal entries will be collected in class on Wednesdays, not submitted online (except for the role play write-up). Each

journal completed satisfactorily will earn 12 points and any journal turned in late will earn 7. Each student will get 6 free points so the total is 150.

2nd Assignment: Group Presentation = 200 points. In preparation for this assignment, you will write a role play (due on 3/19/14) based on an interpersonal conflict that you have experienced, and we will use these role plays to practice what you have learned throughout the semester. Each student will play the role of the intervener, conflict party, and observer in different role plays, but the main focus will be on your role as an intervener. You will video record these role plays in a group on 4/4/14, and each one of you will submit your videos on Blackboard by 4/9/14. As a group you will choose one of these role plays based on: how realistic the depiction of the conflict is, how well it incorporates course content, and how well the video provokes discussion. On 4/11/14, the group will show this video to the class, and give a 15 – 20 minute presentation with each group member explaining their role in the video, why they did what they did, and the insights that they gained from the experience. Groups should also explore any transformational moments in the videos and discuss whether or not the resolution in this situation would be sustainable or superficial. More information on this assignment will be given in class.

3rd Assignment: Working with Conflict = 200 points. You will prepare and execute an intervention in an interpersonal or small group conflict. This assignment has three components: 1) a detailed analysis of the conflict (75 points), 2) a plan for action (50 points), and 3) a reflective essay (75 points). More information on the design and requirements for these will be provided in class. This assignment is due on Blackboard on Sunday 4/20/14.

4th Assignment: Personal Essay = 200 points. Using the work you did in the journals as a guide and with substantial rewriting, compose a reflective essay about your beliefs about conflict, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation. You have some latitude to determine what to talk about as long as the paper is a good reflection, but at the bare minimum discuss your opinions about conflict and the potential for conflict resolution, why you hold these beliefs (where do they come from? What experiences changed your views?), and what you have learned about yourself *in the course*. While I expect you to be able to incorporate concepts from class, this is not a paper in which to list everything you learned. Tell me what was useful at understanding yourself and your own life and experiences and why. **Be sure to include specific course readings and cite your sources.** Also, you do not need to do this as a straight reflection essay. Feel free to add any material (pictures, etc.) that helps make your argument. No matter what, you need to have at least 2000 words of text. This essay is due on Blackboard on 5/7/14.

OPTIONAL: Extra Credit = 25 points. During the semester, I will recommend talks, films and other events that supplement the material we will be covering in class. If you attend or view one of these, you can get 25 extra credit points by writing a 500-word summary and reflection paper about the experience. This needs to be submitted within 1 week after the event.

Format for Assignments

All assignments other than journals are to be turned in electronically through Blackboard before the due time/date. All papers must be documented properly according to a citation manual (e.g. The Chicago Manual of Style, APA, MLA). Keep a copy of all assignments. Failure to follow assignment guidelines may result in a grade deduction.

Late Work. Papers and other assignments are to be turned in to the instructor at the beginning of class on the day due or submitted through Blackboard before the start of class. **Late work will be reduced one letter grade per day.** No work will be accepted over one week late without a valid written medical excuse or notice of death in the family. Unless specifically stipulated, work can be submitted in hard copy or as an electronic file on Blackboard. Email is discouraged, but acceptable in an emergency. Electronic submission is preferred.

Grading Scale

Points	Letter		Points	Letter		Points	Letter		Points	Letter
980 - 1000	A+		870 - 899	B+		770 - 799	C+		600 - 699	D
930 - 979	A		830 - 869	B		730 - 769	C		< 600	F
900 - 929	A-		800 - 829	B-		700 - 729	C-			

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND COLLABORATION

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. This is especially true in New Century College. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification.

Some projects are designed to be undertaken individually. For these projects, you may discuss your ideas with others or ask for feedback; however, you are responsible for making certain that there is no question that the work you hand in is your own. If only your name appears on an assignment, your professors have the right to expect that you have done the work yourself, fully and independently.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious offense. It is important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words (including punctuation) just as they appear in the original, and you must use quotation marks and page number(s) in your citation. If you want to paraphrase ideas from a source, you must still cite the source, using an established citation format.

The re-use of papers, presentations, etc., from one course in another course is not appropriate. In every NCC course, faculty will expect that work that is submitted has been done only for that class. An exception is made for materials included within course portfolios (Integrative Studies, Student Academic Handbook).

Diversity Statement: George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

New Century College, an intentionally inclusive community, promotes and maintains an equitable and just work and learning environment. We welcome and value individuals and their differences including race, economic status, gender expression and identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age, and disability.

- We value our diverse student body and desire to increase the diversity of our faculty and staff.
- We commit to supporting students, faculty and staff who have been the victims of bias and discrimination.
- We promote continuous learning and improvement to create an environment that values diverse points of view and life experiences.
- We believe that faculty, staff and students play a role in creating an environment that engages diverse points of view.
- We believe that by fostering their willingness to hear and learn from a variety of sources and viewpoints, our students will gain competence in communication, critical thinking and global

understanding, aware of their biases and how they affect their interactions with others and the world.

GMU RESOURCES

Counseling Services: (703-993-2380; SUB I, Room 3129) provides individual and group sessions for personal development and assistance with a range of emotional and relational issues. In addition, the Learning Services Program (703-993-2999) offers academic skill-building workshops as well as a tutor referral service.

Office of Disability Services: (703-993-2474; SUB I, Room 2500) assists students with learning or physical conditions affecting learning. If you qualify for accommodation, the ODS staff will provide a form to give to your instructor at the beginning of every course. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

Student Technology Assistance and Resource (STAR) Lab: Johnson Center 229; 993-8990; <http://media.gmu.edu>

Writing Center: (703-993-1824; Robinson A 114, main office; Enterprise 076) provides, at no charge, tutors who can help you develop ideas and revise papers. The Writing Center is also available online at <http://wcenter@gmu.edu>.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction, Creating Learning Community, and Definition of Conflict

Wednesday 1/22

- Introductions and Expectations
- Overview of Course and Syllabus
- Creating our own Subculture

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Tuesdays with Morrie*, pp. 154 - 157 (On Blackboard)

Friday 1/24

Workshop #1

- Definition of Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Conflict Transformation
- Personal Histories of Conflict, including family of origin
- Conflict Metaphors
- Guidelines for Journals

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Interpersonal Conflict*, Chapter 1 (pp. 11-19)
- *Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, Chapter 1-5 (pp. 3-33)

Week 2: *Being and Listening in Conflict*

Wednesday 1/29

- Review pictures of Conflict
- Debrief of workshop and journal exercise
- What is my role in conflict?
- The importance of self-examination
- The 8 Steps to Healing the Heart of Conflict

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Healing the Heart of Conflict*, Ch. 1: *Be* (On Blackboard)
- Nhat Hanh, Thich. "We Have the Compassion and Understanding Necessary to Heal the World," (pp. 128 – 138). (On Blackboard)
- **Due:** Picture representing Conflict, Journal #1

Friday 1/31

Workshop #2

- Discuss best practices of listening
- Roadblocks
- Practice attending skills and following skills
- Practice deep listening

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Tuesdays with Morrie*: pp. 135 – 138 (On Blackboard)
- *People Skills*: Ch. 2 & 3 (pp. 14 – 48) (On Blackboard)

Week 3: *Deepening our Understanding of Conflict*

Wednesday 2/5

- Debrief of Workshop & Journal exercise
- Positions, Goals, Interests, Needs
- The TRIP Model

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Getting to Yes* summary:
<http://www.beyondintractability.org/bksum/fisher-getting>
- *Interpersonal Conflict*, Ch. 3: (only pp. 70 – 83)
- **Due:** Journal #2

Friday 2/7

Workshop #3:

- The Dual Concern Model
- Styles and tactics and your preferences
- Activities with different groups, based on conflict styles
- Practice Reflective Listening Skills

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- Read TKI Profile and Interpretive Report (On Blackboard)
- Complete *Thomas Kilmann Instrument* (On Blackboard)

Week 4: Frameworks for Analysis/Resolution

Wednesday 2/12

- Debrief of Workshop & Journal exercise
- Difficult Conversations: exploring the 3 conversations
 - The “What happened” Conversation
 - The “Feelings” Conversation
 - The “Identity” Conversation
- Shifting towards a learning stance

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Difficult Conversations*, Introduction and Chapter 1 (On Blackboard)
- **Due:** Journal #3

Friday 2/14

Workshop # 4

- Apply the 3 conversations to our own conflicts
- Practice Nonviolent Communication Skills

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Nonviolent Communication*: Ch. 2 & 3 (On Blackboard)

Week 5: The Context of Conflict and Conflict Mapping

Wednesday 2/19

- Power and influence
- Culture and Gender
- Identity

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Mediation and Facilitation Manual*: Chapter 2 Part 3 & 4 (pp. 78-83, & pp. 99-107)
- *Sweet Fruit*: Ch. 8 Navajo Handshake (pp. 29-36)
- **Due:** Journal #4

Friday 2/21

Workshop #5

- Introduction to Conflict Mapping
- Apply mapping models from Lederach & SPITCEROW
- Integration of other frameworks as mapping models

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, Ch. 6, 7 (pp. 34 - 47)

- *SPITCEROW Model* (On Blackboard)

Week 6: *Intervening in Conflict*

Wednesday 2/26

- Debrief of Workshop & Journal exercise
- Informal Intervention
- Different types of Mediation

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Interpersonal Conflict*, Ch. 9 (pp. 271 – 275)
- *Narrative Mediation*, Ch. 1
- **Due:** Journal #5

Friday 2/28

Workshop #6

- Practice Bolton's "Conflict Resolution Method"
- Intervention Skills training
- Transformation vs. Resolution Approaches

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *People Skills*, pp. 218 – 225
- *Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, Ch. 8, 9, 10 (pp. 48 – 71)

Week 7: *Intervening in Conflict (Negotiation)*

Wednesday 3/5

- Debrief of Workshop & Journal exercise
- Informal Negotiation
- Formal Negotiation

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Mediation and Facilitation Manual*: Chapter 3 (pp. 146-148)
- **Due:** Journal #6

Friday 3/7

Workshop #7

- Negotiation simulation

No Readings

Week 8: Spring Break

Week 9: *Intervening in Conflict (Forgiveness)*

Wednesday 3/19

- Debrief of Workshop & Journal exercise
- Forgiveness

- Summary of *The Sunflower* and responses
- Reconciliation

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Tuesdays with Morrie*, pp. 164 – 168
- Wiesenthal, Simon. *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness*. New York: Schocken Books Inc. 1997. (summary, Responses by the Dalai Lama, Herbert Marcuse, Robert Coles, Desmond Tutu) (On Blackboard)
- **Due:** Journal #7: Role play write-up

Friday 3/21

Workshop #8

- Activities on Forgiveness and Reconciliation
- Forgiveness meditation

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- Bayda, Ezra, *The Path to Forgiveness* (pp 171-180) (On Blackboard)
- *Sweet Fruit*: Chapter 3 (pp. 11-16)

Week 10: *The Anatomy of Peace*

Wednesday 3/26

- Debrief of Workshop & Journal exercise
- The Anatomy of Peace Framework
 - The Pattern of Conflict—Collusion
 - Choosing War—the Choice Diagram

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *The Anatomy of Peace*, Ch. 5 & 10 (pp. 38-49, pp. 81-91) (On Blackboard)
- **Due:** Journal #8

Friday 3/28

Workshop #9

- Getting out of the box
- Spreading Peace—the Peacemaking Pyramid
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Role-plays of interactions when in the box and out of the box

Readings

- *The Anatomy of Peace*, Ch. 22 (pp. 201-213) (On Blackboard)
- *Sweet Fruit*: Ch. 6 (pp. 23-26) (On Blackboard)

Week 11: *The Art of Conflict Transformation, The Creative Act*

Wednesday 4/2

- Debrief of Workshop & Journal exercise
- Exploring the moral imagination and creativity in peacebuilding
- How is peacebuilding and conflict transformation an art?
- Meet with groups and choose role play

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *The Moral Imagination*, Preface, Ch. 1 & Ch. 7 (pp. vii – xi, 3-5, & 65-74)
- **Due:** Journal #9

Friday 4/4

Workshop #10

- Students will practice applying frameworks to role plays that they wrote
- Students will take turns intervening in role plays using these frameworks and **video record them**

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- Review course material up until this point
- Choose 5 frameworks that apply to your role-play

Week 12: *Restorative Justice*

Wednesday 4/9 GUEST SPEAKER

- Restorative justice

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *Mediation and Facilitation Manual* (pp. 92-94)
- **Due:** Journal #10, Upload group videos and share link

Friday 4/11

- Group Presentations and discussion

No Readings

Week 13: *Connecting the Individual to the Global*

Wednesday 4/16

- Examine conflict transformation at multiple levels
- Dugan's nested model
- Lederach's Peacemaking pyramid

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- Dugan, M. (1996). A nested theory of conflict. (pp 9-19) (On Blackboard)
- *Mediation and Facilitation Manual* (pp. 95-98)

Friday 4/18 GUEST SPEAKER

Case Study #1: Israel/Palestine

- Conflict Zone Web Series
- Video on Seeds of Peace

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- TBA

Week 14: *Connecting the Individual to the Global*

Wednesday 4/23

- *The Tipping Point*
- Gopin's incremental conflict resolution theory
- Application of Anatomy of Peace at the Global Level
- Healing the Heart of Conflict 8 steps integration

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- *To Make the Earth Whole*, Ch. 3 (On Blackboard)
- *The Tipping Point* (excerpt)
- **Due:** Journal #11

Friday 4/25 GUEST SPEAKER

Case Study #2: Syria

- Speaker will present on work in Syrian refugee camps

Readings

- TBA

Week 15: *Integration*

Wednesday 4/30

- Integration of content learned throughout course
- Apply theories and frameworks to multiple cases

Readings and Assignments (complete before class):

- **Due:** Journal #12
- TBA

Friday 5/2

- Closing semester party
- Reflection on Learning
- Course Evaluation

No Readings

Week 16:

Wednesday 5/7

FINAL PAPER DUE