

## ADR: Theoretical Perspectives ADRN6281

### Course Outline (Online)

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**Description:** You will explore the theoretical basis for various conflict resolution processes, as well as the practical application of these concepts in the private and public sector. Weekly topics will be chosen to address the particular interests of participants. These topics will be selected from a wide range of issues that are emerging as the use of ADR processes rapidly expands throughout organizations and institutions. Participants require access to the internet.

**Course Goals:** The course is designed to complement the skills and process oriented courses in the rest of the Conflict Management certificate program with theory and reflection. The course covers conflict analysis, negotiation and mediation theory and introduces students to conflict resolution systems design, and other topics in the field of alternative dispute resolution raised by students. It is organized as a seminar course with students participating each week and acting as a discussion leader in one week.

This is a required course for anyone wishing to receive the Professional Certificate in Conflict Management. It is taught completely on-line. Students' learning will come from their conversation and interaction with each other and the instructor as well as through readings from a text and writing a paper.

**Pre-Requisites:** At least one of Mediation Skills and Processes, Negotiation Skills and Processes and Non-Neutral Mediation Skills and Processes.

**Course Objectives:** At the completion of this course, students will:

- Identify ways in which the skills and approaches they have encountered in this and other courses in the Conflict Management Certificate Program have been or can be incorporated in their lives
- Be familiar, in general terms, with the various schools of thought within the ADR scholarly community, and begin to integrate the issues raised with other knowledge and life experience.
- Develop a deep understanding of one or more issues in ADR, through their work leading a seminar and writing a paper:

### Course Discussion Topic and Reading Schedule:

Students are expected to prepare for each of the weekly on-line discussions by reading the pages of the text noted below, and to post replies to each seminar leader's question(s) and well as replies to their fellow students. Each student will act as a seminar leader during one of these weeks. As much as possible, the student's choice of which week they prefer will be accommodated. However, to ensure that this role is distributed over all five weeks, students may be assigned a week that is not their first choice. Topics and Readings are set out below.

<b>Week One:</b>	Conflict Analysis
<b>Week Two:</b>	Negotiation
<b>Week Three:</b>	Negotiation and Mediation
<b>Week Four:</b>	Mediation
<b>Week Five:</b>	Online Dispute Resolution

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## Grading:

- Participation in weekly on-line discussions, inclusive of two very brief reflections on your participation, submitted at the course mid-point and at the end of the course. (30%)
- Acting as seminar leader for a topic during one week of the course, inclusive of very brief reflection on this experience (20%) **Due the Monday following your week as a seminar leader.**
- Reflection on the Impact of Conflict Management courses on your life and work (10%). Due at 11:00 pm on Monday of week two.
- Final paper (40%). Due at 11:00 pm on the Monday following the end of the course.

## Expectations:

### Participation in Online Discussions:

Participants are expected to respond to each question posed by that week's seminar leaders early in the week to allow their fellow participants and the seminar leader to engage in discussion about their answers. Participants are also expected to respond to some responses from fellow students each week, so that on-line 'conversation' ensues. It is not necessary or desirable to respond to every post.

Learners are expected to engage in active, thoughtful and respectful participation in online discussions. Their contributions should exhibit that they have read and critically reflected upon the course materials, whether they agree or disagree with the idea. Often ideas that challenge our experiences, assumptions or perspectives are the most interesting and spark the most dialogue.

Learners should respectfully contribute to and further the course discussions, offering new ideas and sparking conversation among classmates and the instructor. Participants' contributions should go well beyond simple phrases such as 'I agree' or 'me too,' although your fellow students will find it affirming if you mention your agreement in your reply. Feel free to put forward a contrasting perspective, so long as you do so respectfully. (Assertiveness skills work in online discussions as well as face to face conversations.)

Learners are expected to participate in a manner that reflects their wisdom, experience, critical thinking skills and analysis of course materials and discussion threads. Postings should exhibit a high use of critical thinking skills such as:

- Stating conclusions, implications or insights beyond opinions
- Referring to the text (and perhaps other sources although this is not required) and providing thoughtful analysis and exploration of the author's ideas
- Citing examples from experience and drawing inferences from experience
- Sharing 'aha' moments – when something 'clicks' or connects for you
- Responding to the ideas of fellow participants with empathy or reason

### Leading the Discussion

Students should liaise in advance with the other students who are also discussion leaders in their week to ensure that their questions relate to different articles in the materials. You can do this by email within the course (Messages tab). Basically, we run this as first come first served: if someone lays claim to an issue or article within that week's readings, others need to pick a different issue or article.

You should post your question in the Forum for that week no later than Monday morning of your week. Some people find that they are more available on the weekend and prefer to post their question the Sunday before their week starts. Usually one broad question is sufficient but you can

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also ask a secondary question, for example, asking for experiences from participants that relate to the issue. On the one hand, you should avoid questions that are so complex that people are confused and therefore reluctant to reply, and on the other hand, you should avoid questions that are so simple that they require little or no thought to answer. It is usually helpful to your fellow students if you reference the page numbers of the article in the text your question relates to. It is up to you to keep the discussion ball rolling, so to speak, by posting replies or asking probing questions when your fellow students post answers. (Don't forget that you are still a participant, and post replies to the other discussion leaders that week.)

## Reflection Pieces

First Assignment - Write two pages describing the impact on your life and work of any of the concepts, approaches or skills you have learned in the courses you have taken so far in the Conflict Management certificate program. Feel free to echo comments you made on the same question in the discussion area of the course. This assignment is intended to serve two purposes, one profound and the other practical. Profound: it forces you to consider in what ways are you open to influence and change as a result of new learning. Practical: it gives you an early opportunity to practice submitting an assignment.

You are also asked to write very brief reflections on your participation in the course – mid way through and at the end and to suggest a letter grade that you think your reading, postings and contribution to the discussion warrant. (Your actual grade will be assigned by me.)

Reflection pieces are personal, not academic works so there are no style requirements. You should write in the first person. More information including how to submit these assignments is included in the Assignment Tab.

## Paper

The paper should be academic in style and content, and have a clear focus and logical flow. It should reflect your analysis, insights and conclusions on a topic or issue, based upon readings from the course or outside readings related to the course. Extensive research and footnoting is NOT required, but you should reference authors who have shaped your thinking or on whose ideas you are commenting. You must give credit to words authored by someone else – copying someone else's words without acknowledging the source is plagiarism and is a serious offence. Extensive quoting usually signals a weak paper so don't overdo this. The vast majority of the words on the page should be your own.

There are many issues discussed in the text that are not part of the required reading for the course and any of these issues are open to you as a topic for your paper. You may also choose to write about an issue on which you were a seminar leader or an issue that was raised in the assigned readings. If you would like to write your paper on a subject not included in the text, get permission from me first. You are permitted to do a case study or book review instead of an essay, but critical analysis and thinking also need to be displayed in this as well as references to readings from the course.

Your paper should be 4-5 pages double spaced with 1" margins and a 12 or 14 point font. It should not exceed 8 pages. Please make sure your name appears on the paper and that you number the pages.

## Notes on assignments (papers):

- Must be academic in style and content
- Must have a clear focus
- Must present ideas in a logical and well thought-out flow
- Arguments, analysis and conclusions must be based on clearly identified research and sources
- Must cite all references from other sources
- Must be in paragraph format
- Must be double-spaced, and typewritten

## Grading:

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

## Online Participation Grading Chart:

The following chart will act as a guide for assessing student participation in an online course.

Grade	Criteria
9-10	<p>The student participates frequently, providing relevant responses more than 35 times spread evenly over the length of the course.</p> <p>Replies to discussion questions, instructor comments as well as the responses of other students in a positive and critical manner.</p> <p>The student responds in a timely manner (allowing enough time for fellow students to respond, and not posting on the last day of the unit).</p> <p>Responses are of a high quality, an obvious effort has been made to research the answer. Responses offer new perspectives on course material and spark discussion amongst the class.</p>
7-8	<p>The student participates consistently, providing relevant responses 30-35 times over the length of the course.</p> <p>The student responds in a timely manner (allowing enough time for fellow students to respond, and not posting on the last day of the unit).</p> <p>The student offers new ideas and responds to the contributions of others.</p>
6	<p>The student provides some relevant contributions, 15-20 times over the length of the course.</p> <p>The student responds before the end of the unit.</p> <p>The student occasionally offers new ideas and responds to others.</p>

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- 5            The student's contributions are inconsistent in both quality and timing, 10-15 times over the length of the course.
- The student's responses are not always on time.
- The student does not offer any new ideas, and responses to fellow students are few.
- 4            The student rarely provides contributions to the course, 5-10 times.
- The student does not always respond on time.
- The student has difficulty understanding the course content, and does not respond to the contributions of the other students.
- 0-3         The student provides little or no discussion, less than 5 times.
- Information is contributed only when asked to by the instructor, and responses are negative or disagreeable to the instructor/fellow students.
- Responses show little in the way of comprehension of course material. The responses are usually limited to "I agree", "Me too" or the like.

## **Policy on Cheating and Academic Misconduct:**

Academic honesty is a cornerstone of conduct at Western University. We cannot have freedom of expression without integrity. Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences; please refer to the section on "Scholastic Offences" in the current University Academic Calendar, or on the web at <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca>. Such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in this University or elsewhere (without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom the work is submitted). Students enrolled in non-degree courses are expected to abide by the University's code of conduct.

## **Code of Student Conduct**

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at Western University, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For the complete Code of Student Conduct: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/board/code.pdf>.

## **Plagiarism**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and Turnitin.com ( <http://www.turnitin.com> ).

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## **How often will the instructor communicate with me?**

Because this is a seminar course, the instructor will primarily communicate with students in the class discussion. The instructor will log onto the course three to four times per week.

## **Policy on Late Assignments:**

Late assignments will be accepted for three days following the due date. A 10% per day deduction, including weekends, up to a maximum of three days, after which assignments will not be accepted and a grade of zero will be assigned unless documentation for accommodation has been provided in advance.

## **When will I receive my grades?**

Final grades will be available 2 weeks after the last scheduled day of the course. A grade report can be printed from myWCS.

## **How do I hand in assignments?**

All assignments will be submitted electronically through OWL using the assignment tool. Failure to meet deadlines without the instructor's written permission will be subject to the late assignment policy. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all assignments forwarded to the instructor arrive before the due date. If you experience difficulty in submitting assignments through OWL, you are responsible for contacting the instructor and arranging an alternate method of delivery (e.g. e-mail attachment) for the assignment.