

Niagara University
Graduate Mental Health Counseling Program
College of Education

Professor: Al Dirschberger Jr., LMSW, ABD
Building and Room: ACAD 127
Spring Semester 2008
Thursdays 7:15 PM – 10:00 PM

Phone: 716-286-8328
E-mail: afd@niagara.edu
Office Hours: W: 6:00-7:00
or by appointment

A. Course Number: EDU 619C
Course Name: Mediation and Conflict Resolution

Note: Please turn off your cell phone prior to entering the classroom.
This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the professor.
It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with and refer to the course catalogue for additional information concerning such topics as academic honesty.

B. Catalogue Description

This graduate course is designed to provide graduate students in the Mental Health Counseling program and other graduate programs practical education and experience in professional mediation and conflict resolution. While this course has a generalist focus, topics such as family mediation, divorce mediation, victim-offender mediation, mediation between organizations, cultural groups, etc. will also be covered.

C. Required Textbooks:

Fisher, R., & Ury, W. (1991). *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, 2nd Edition. New York: Penguin.
Moore, C.W. (2003). *The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict*, 3rd Edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

D. Conceptual Framework:

Niagara University's graduate counseling programs adhere to the Eight Core Areas set forth by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The Eight Core Areas are listed below along with which standards this course addresses.

1. Professional Identity: not addressed
2. Social and Cultural Diversity: **addressed in this course**
3. Human Growth & Development: not addressed
4. Career Development: not addressed
5. Helping Relationships: **addressed in this course**
6. Group Work: **addressed in this course**
7. Assessment: not addressed
8. Research & Program Evaluation: not addressed

Note: CACREP requires that each course meet at least one of the Eight Core Areas.

E. Course Objectives/requirements:

1. Objectives

- a. Demonstrated understanding of the principles and ethics of mediation
- b. Understanding the advantages and limitations of professional mediation.
- c. Mediation as distinct from counseling, arbitration and other professional services.
- d. Ability to determine when mediation is inappropriate.
- e. Weekly classroom attendance.
- f. Students must read assigned material and be prepared to demonstrate mediation skills during in-class presentations.
- g. Learning how to initiate and conduct mock mediation sessions through weekly role-plays.

2. Assignments

- a. Each student will be required to research and write a 8 to 10 page paper (in APA format) Students will research a special topic relevant to mediation and apply it to the course material, their personal experiences, and include their own opinion regarding the issue. This assignment (paper and presentation) will make up **40 points on the grading scale**.
- b. Students will write two outline responses to the material read in the “Getting to Yes” text. These outline responses will include key points as well as the student’s reaction to these points. The length of these papers should be 4-6 pages (**need not be APA referenced**) Students may critique pages 1-56 or 81-109. Students should critique salient aspects of the text, analyze the efficacy of the text suggestions- highlighting what the student sees as the most relevant information, and finally, speculate on ways the information is useful in said student’s current or future career. Papers should be grammatically correct, and written in a way illustrating a firm grasp of the information. Also, feel free to disagree with sections of the text. The outline response project will constitute **40 points on the grading scale**.
- c. Students will participate in weekly mock mediation sessions. Two students will play mediator, and 3-4 other students will be in conflict. These mock sessions are not graded, but each student is required to participate. All students will be required to play the role of co-mediator at least once. Mock role-plays will be 30 minutes, with the remainder of the class providing critique. **20 points given for the role-play**.

P.S.: Do not fear this role-play. We’re ALL going to learn together.

3. Grading:

A+ = 100-98
A = 97-93
A- = 92-89

B+ = 88-85
B = 84-80
B- = 79-74

C+ = 73-70
C = 72-66
C- = 65-60
Below 60 = F

Note: Students who miss more than two classes will receive a grade of incomplete (I).

F. Methods of Instruction:

Weekly sessions will be organized using a seminar approach. It is expected that students will have read and be prepared to discuss the previously assigned material (e.g. the text and handouts) Niagara University's College of Education and Graduate Counseling programs adhere to a Constructivist philosophy of teaching, where the students are active participants in the educational process. Active participation means asking questions, participating in class discussion, role-plays, etc.

G. Course Schedule:

The material below must be read prior to the date indicated so that it can be discussed during class on the week it is listed.

- Jan. 16 Getting Started
(Distribute syllabus, outline course, and define/discuss mediation and conflict resolution, cover expectations)
- Jan. 23 The Foundation of Effective Mediation
(Chapters 1,2, 3, & 4 – Moore text)-**Mock Role Play**
- Jan 30 Foundation continued
(Chapters 5, 6, – Moore text)
Mock Role Play
- Feb. 6 The Anatomy of a Mediation Session
(Chapter 8 & 9 – Moore text)
Mock Role Play
- Feb 13 No Class-Winter Recess**
- Feb. 20 Coping with Special Situations – Cultural Issues, Multiparty Mediation,
Co-mediation
(Chapters 7 & 15 – Moore text)
Mock Role Play
- Feb. 27 Getting to Yes
Chapter 1-3 Fisher. et al. text.
Mock Role Play
- Mar. 5 Getting to Yes (Fisher text)
Chapters 4-6
Reaction paper 1 due (Fisher text)
Mock Role Play
- Mar. 12 Conflict Transformation
Ten Questions People Ask About Getting to Yes – Fisher et al.
Mock Role Play
Reaction paper 2 due (Fisher text)

Mar. 19 No Class-Spring Break

Mar. 26 Moore text, chaps. 10 & 11
Mock Role Play

Apr. 2 Moore text, chapters 12 & 13.
Mock Role Play

April 9 Moore text, Chapter 14
Mock Role Play

April 16 Moore text, chapter 15
Mock Role Play

Apr. 23 Moore text, chapter 16
Mock Role Play

Apr 30 Moore text, chapter 17
Term papers due

May 7 No class.

H. Bibliography:

Alfini, J. J.; Press, S. B.; Sternlight, J. R.; and Stulbert, J. B. (2006). *Mediation Theory and Practice, 2nd Ed.* San Francisco, CA: LexisNexis.

Beer, J. E. and E. Stief (1997). *The Mediator's Handbook, 3rd Ed.* New York: New Society Publishing.

Docherty, J. S. (2005). *Strategic Negotiation.* Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

Fisher, R., W. Ury and B. Patton (1991). *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In, 2nd Edition.* New York: Penguin Group Inc.

Kovach, K. K. (2004). *Mediation: Principles and Practice, 3rd Ed.* St. Paul, MN: Thomson West Publishing Company.

Laderach, J. P. (2003). *Conflict Transformation.* Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

Mock, R. (2003). *The Role-Play Book, 2nd Ed.* Akron, PA: Mennonite Conciliation Service

Moore, Christopher, W. (2003). *The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict, 3rd Edition.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

Umbreit, M. S. (2001). *The Handbook of Victim Offender Mediation.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

I. Disability Accommodation:

Any student who requires academic adjustment or accommodation because of disability is requested to speak with the professor no later than the first two weeks of the semester. Students should notify Diane Stolting, Coordinator of Specialized Services, located on the first floor of Seton Hall of their particular disability and special needs (telephone number 716-286-8076). Niagara University will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities.

J. Counseling Center:

Any student in need of personal counseling may use the Niagara University Office of Counseling Services located in Seton Hall-Lower Level. The Office of Counseling Services offers free, confidential counseling services. Call 286-8536.

K. Focusing time:

Because most of us lead very busy lives, each class will begin with a focusing time. This exercise is not intended to be religious or spiritual, simply a time to close off the distractions of our active life to better concentrate on the class. Focusing time will begin at 7:20pm.