CONFLICT RESOLUTION  
LDST 354-01  

FALL TERM 2009  

COURSE SYLLABUS  
Section 1  

Instructor:  J. Thomas Wren  
Office:  Jepson Hall, Room 241  
Phone:  287-6098 (Office)  
Office Hours:  Tuesday, Thursday 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. and by appointment  
Class Meeting Time and Location:  Thursday 3:00-5:40; Jepson 103  

PURPOSE:  
Leadership is all about fostering the accomplishment of mutual objectives. In this process, one central task of a leader is to help resolve disputes either among his/her followers or with outside constituencies. In this, leaders are interdependent with other people and groups. Their knowledge is often incomplete and their information is limited. Leaders must draw upon all their skills and experience to discover under what prevailing conditions and under what terms an agreement or settlement will be just and acceptable to all parties. The purpose of this course is to teach students how to resolve conflicts through negotiation and persuasion. This course has the following objectives for students:  

-- To understand the origins of conflict  
-- To explore the role of power in conflict  
-- To learn how to resolve conflicts  
-- To analyze the role of the leader as peace-maker  
-- To develop negotiating and bargaining skills  
-- To reflect on one's behavior in conflict situations  

DESCRIPTION:  
It is much easier to start a conflict than it is to stop one. The word "negotiation" comes from the Latin neg (not) and otium (leisure). In other words resolving conflicts is a lot of work. Like most courses in conflict resolution, this course teaches students how to negotiate and create consensus. A large part of the course will consist of simulation exercises that allow each student to experience different types of conflict and work on his/her conflict resolution and negotiation skills. We will also discuss how leaders resolve inter- and intra-group conflict in social movements, political, community, and formal organizations. In the latter part of the course, we
will analyze cases concerning conflicts in the world today. Students will study and discuss the ethical issues related to negotiations.

**GRADING:**

1) 20% Individual Paper - With your new-found knowledge of conflict resolution and negotiation skills, each student will be assigned a case drawn from an existing conflict in the international arena. Introductory materials will stem from a set of United Nations case studies and other sources. You will be expected to research and update the factual details of the conflict (using on-line newspaper archives, etc.), and, more importantly, analyze the actions of the principals from the perspective of the readings and insights of this course. How might this conflict have been better handled? Details will be forthcoming.

2) 20% Midterm Examination: Students will be tested on their knowledge and application of course content. It is here that your understanding of the readings will become central.

3) 20% Group Project: Near the end of the term, groups of students will devise their own conflict resolution scenarios and implement them during class time. Drawing upon the insights of the course, each group will choose an appropriate negotiation situation, create roles and informational materials, and then lead the class through the exercise. The exercise will be accompanied by a written "instructor's manual" which will set out the learning objectives, relate the exercise to relevant readings, and discuss learning outcomes.

4) 20% Final Examination: This examination (possibly take-home) will require the student to pull together and integrate the theoretical and practical lessons of the course.

5) 20% Reflective Essays/Class Participation: At various points in the course, each student will be asked to reflect upon his/her skill and confidence-level regarding conflict resolution. In doing so, a connection should be made to in-class activities. These papers will be assessed according to the perceived thoughtfulness of the essay; the assignment is intended to help you to become a reflective practitioner. Class participation is also important. Students MUST be prepared for every class. Since this class cannot be made-up, you will be severely penalized for unexcused absences. Your participation in class discussion is expected to be both substantive and thoughtful.

**TEXTS:**


COURSE OUTLINE:

Week 1: Introduction to Course
No Assignment

Week 2: The Nature of Negotiation; Interdependence
Text: pp. 1-26
Readings: pp. 1-13
Prepare: Disarmament Exercise (handout)

** FIRST REFLECTIVE ESSAY DUE **

Week 3: Negotiation Planning and Strategy
Text: pp. 86-110
Readings: pp. 74-87

** DISCUSSION OF INDIVIDUAL PAPER TOPIC **

Week 4: Distributive Bargaining; Ethics of Bargaining
Text: pp. 27-57, 167-189
Readings: pp. 215-235
Prepare: The Used Car, Readings: pp. 502-503; SINS Scale, pp. 692-693.

Week 5: Integrative Negotiation
Getting to Yes, pp. 1-94
Text: pp. 58-84
Readings: pp. 117-140
Prepare: Knight/Excalibur Exercise, Readings: p. 504

Week 6: Negotiation Breakdowns
Getting to Yes, pp. 95-144
Readings: pp. 109-116

** FACT SUMMARY OF INDIVIDUAL PAPER DUE **

Week 7: Communication Processes
Text: pp. 111-148
Readings: pp. 153-162, 171-182
Exercise to be completed prior to class: "Collecting Nos," Readings: pp. 570-571
Prepare: Salary Negotiation, Readings: 525

*** MIDTERM EXAMINATION ***

Week 8: Social Structure of Negotiation
“Social Structure of Negotiations,” On reserve
Student Prisoner exercise

** SECOND REFLECTIVE ESSAY DUE **

*** SPRING BREAK ***

Week 9: Negotiation in Groups
Readings: pp. 208-228
Prepare: Connecticut Valley Schools, Readings: 547-549

* * FORM GROUPS FOR PROJECTS (in class) * *

Week 10: Power in Negotiation
Text: 149-166
Readings: pp. 188-196
Complete Influence Tactics Survey, pp. 694-695
Prepare: Power Game Simulation, Readings: p. 543

** INDIVIDUAL PAPERS DUE **

Week 11: Third Party Interventions
Readings: pp. 455-472, 561-563
Prepare: Elmwood Hospital Dispute, Readings: pp. 540-542

Week 12: Student Group Exercises

Week 13: Student Group Exercises

Week 14: International Conflict Resolution
Text: pp. 229-255
Readings: pp. 349-384
Prepare: Alpha-Beta, Readings: pp. 567-568; 500 English Sentences, 565
** FINAL REFLECTIVE ESSAY DUE **

*** FINAL EXAMINATION FORMAT TBA ***