

CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND RESOLUTION

This is a seminar in applied sociology. In addition to using sociological theory and research that meets high standards of academic sociology, theory must be relevant to the practice of successfully intervening and resolving interpersonal and intergroup disputes.

The seminar format will expect students to be prepared by reading both the text and reading materials as assigned through the 15 weeks. These materials include the course text, "The Third Side" (which also has a useful web site with additional explanation and materials), all readings assigned by guest speakers, and all materials produced by students in the class for discussion purposes.

The major research paper in the seminar will be chosen by the student according to their interests within the themes of the seminar and approved by the instructor. Examples of previous topics are listed below. Students in this seminar have a significant opportunity to pursue their own interests in the area of conflict resolution with individual guidance from the faculty.

Students considering enrolling in Soc 730 should contact the instructor to discuss their areas of interest to see if they can be accommodated in the seminar. dchandle@hawaii.edu

Student Learning Objectives. (SLO) By the end of the seminar students should be able to:

- A. Understand and use the sociological perspective in the analysis of interpersonal and intergroup conflict.
- B. Understand and describe the variety of approaches used in the resolution of interpersonal and intergroup conflict.
- C. Understand and describe the variety of interventions used by conflict resolution practitioners in Hawai'i.

Activities:

Lectures and discussion of the sociological perspective on examples of interpersonal and intergroup cases of conflict provided by the instructor. SLO[A] In class lectures and discussions will be supplemented via individual e-mail and "Laulima".

Critical discussion of the sociological perspective on cases of interpersonal and intergroup cases of conflict provided by the students. SLO[A].

Students will read, write short critical accounts of, and discuss the assigned text William Ury's "The Third Side". SLO[B]

Eight conflict resolution practitioners working in Hawai'i will provide reading materials on their areas of practice and research and visit the seminar to answer student questions and describe their areas of conflict resolution practice. Students will discuss the readings and guest speakers presentations. SLO[B,C]

By the fifth week of the seminar students will be required to write a short "research proposal" on one or more research paper topics they are considering for their research papers in the seminar. Each topic will set out a research question, describe how research will be done SLO [A] How the topic fits with the theme of the seminar SLO [A,B,C] and why it is important. The student research proposals will be distributed and each student will lead a short in

class critical discussion of how the other student's proposal does or does not fit with SLO [A,B,C]

The instructor will counsel individual students on their research topics and approve the topic and research plan. SLO [A,B,C]

By the tenth week students will prepare a written progress report on the research that will be distributed to each student. Each student will lead a critical discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of (another) student's research to date. SLO [A,B,C]

Collaboration between students on research sources and approaches and individual advice from the faculty will be encouraged throughout the seminar.

Research paper presentations will be delivered by each student with discussion by the faculty and students expected during the last three weeks of the semester. SLO [A,B,C]

ASSESSMENT

The final research paper will determine 70% of the final grade. There will be two sets of criteria in evaluating these research papers. The first will be conventional graduate student expectations such as, quality of writing, logic, and adequacy of research technique. The second criteria for the final paper will track the three SLO's with particular attention given to SLO [A], the use of the sociological perspective in analyzing conflict with the purpose of prevention and intervention. SLO [B,C]

The activities in class, short written assignments, presentations, participating and the critique and quality of suggestions for guests and other students' work will be assessed for the remaining 30%

of the final grade. These will be assessed against the three SLO's with particular attention paid to SLO [B, C].

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT RESEARCH FROM PREVIOUS SEMESTERS

1. Family disputes and the effectiveness of mediation, US and various societies.
2. Why Norwegian mediators are prominent in international dispute resolution
3. Bullying in American and Japanese schools
4. Ethnic tensions in Vietnamese communes.
5. Dispute resolution in virtual (on line) communities.
6. Intergroup conflict within Hawaiian Sovereignty groups
7. Administrative conflict resolution in Vietnamese Schools
8. Mediation in US higher education
9. The concept of neutrality in third party conflict resolution
10. Dispute resolution in international sports.
11. Dispute resolution in cases of domestic violence in Cambodia
12. Dispute resolution and endangered species
13. Environmental dispute resolution
14. Conflict resolution in developing countries, Indonesia
15. Alternative Dispute Resolution in the US. Justice system