**COURSE SYLLABUS: Turning Conflicts into Collaboration**

**Course Title:** Skills for Impact - Turning Conflicts into Collaboration

**Instructor:** Kinga Goncz

**ECTS:** 2

**Term:** Spring

**Module:** MPA Skills for Impact Elective Course

**Relation to other courses:** None

**Background and Overall Aim of the Course:**

The Skills for Impact (SFI) program is a mandatory, applied element of the MPA program. The program aims to equip students with core vocational competencies that are of high value in the workplace, including but not limited to team building, leadership, emotional intelligence, planning, risk management and critical reflection. The SFI modules complement academic learning in the MPA and provide an important opportunity for practice-oriented learning and broad skills development

Managing conflicts and turning them into collaborative settings are among those core competencies.

Conflicts are unavoidable aspects of social life, inherent in all human relations. We respond to a conflict with strong emotions, perceive it as a threat, but it can be turned into an opportunity for individuals and communities.

Public policy is mostly dealing with contoversial issues, addressing tough problems with diverse stakeholders’ perspectives and interests. In order to develop effective public policy initiatives, people’s conflicting interests , needs and values have to be taken into consideration. The best way is to do it by engaging them into identifying issues, generating alternative proposals to address these issues and finding a creative way of solving problems jointly.

In the public policy landscape dispute resolution processes - such as mediation and policy dialogue - are mobilizing resources, empowering people and contributing to more effective policy implementation.

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the workshop, students will

* be more aware of the causes, dynamics and consequences of a conflict situation;
* learn how to reformulate offensive messages helping people to take personal responsibility for their feelings;
* develop skills of reframing - turning the negative presentation of a conflict to a constructive one while preserving the content, contributing to clarification and de-escalation;
* understand the role of a neutral process manager;
* be familiarized with the collaborative approach of preventing and resolving conflicts;
* learn about the concept and steps of mediation;
* be able to adapt these principles for designing inclusive public processes.

**Learning Activities and Teaching Method:**

The purpose of this course is to learn fundamental principles and practice necessary skills for preventing and resolving conflicts in two-party and multi-party settings.

The course is tailored to explore techniques for collaborative processes and to develop awareness of process manager’s role, using simulations, role plays, case studies and questionnaires, followed by class discussions and theoretical inputs.

Selected videos will demonstrate the techniques and help students to design collaborative processes in different organizational and cultural contexts.

**Assessment:**

The course’s credits are earned on a Pass/Fail basis.

For passing the module students have to attend and participate in all three days of the course and write a 2000 word take home exam on

a) a summary of the three-four most important lessons learned during the course,

b) how do they forsee to use the learned skills in their private and professional life.

Students are also required to refer to the readings in their paper.

**Course Content:**

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| **Day 1** |  |
| **Morning:** | Introduction to the topics and methods of the course  Expectations and groundrules |
|  | The causes, dynamics and consequences of a conflict situation – simulation  Personal conflict management styles – how and when to use them |
| **Afternoon:** | Conflict management approaches  Role of a process manager Communication tools for managing the process  Needs to be considered for satisfaction with a decision  The concept and steps of mediation  Preparation of the next day |
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| **Day 2** |  |
| **Morning** | Mediation Phase 1– 2  Role play in breakout groups |
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|  | Reframing- contribution to clarification and de-escalation. |
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| **Afternoon** | Brainstorming.  Mediation Phase 3  Role play in breakout groups  Preparation of the next day |
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| **Day 3** |  |
| Morning | Concept of policy dialogue  Preparation and facilitation of a policy dialogue  Designing a policy dialogue in breakout groups |
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| Afternoon | Application of the learned concepts and techniques  Evaluation and closing of the course |
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**Pre-course Mandatory Readings:**

1. Moving through Conflict to Collaboration

[http://nau.edu/EAW/\_Forms/MovingthroughConflicttoCollaboration­\_001.pdf](http://nau.edu/EAW/_Forms/MovingthroughConflicttoCollaboration_001.pdf)

1. Genesis of Conflict:The Zero-Sum Mindset

[www.cardozojcr.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Cohen.pdf](http://www.cardozojcr.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Cohen.pdf)

1. An Anthropologist’s Approach to Mediation

[www.cardozojcr1.com/vol11no1/81-98pdf](http://www.cardozojcr1.com/vol11no1/81-98pdf)

1. Notes on Facilitative Model of Mediation

www.cityu.edu.hk>ADR\_Moot>doc

1. Concept and Process of Mediation

[www.mediationbhc.gov.in/PDF/concept\_and\_process.pdf](http://www.mediationbhc.gov.in/PDF/concept_and_process.pdf)

1. Communication Skills for Mediators. Active Listening <https://nvmsus.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/chapter-7.pdf>

**Readings for Preparation of Day 2**

1. Remarkable Reframing

[www.eprintsmaynoothuniversity/6257/1/Remarkable\_Reframing\_FINAL\_12.7.pdf](http://www.eprintsmaynoothuniversity/6257/1/Remarkable_Reframing_FINAL_12.7.pdf)

1. Consensus Decision Making-Seeds for Change

[www.seedforchange.org.uk/consensus.pdf](http://www.seedforchange.org.uk/consensus.pdf)

1. Mediation and Conflict Transformation-Center for Security Studies [www.css.ethz.ch/publications/pdfs/Discussion-Points-5.pdf](http://www.css.ethz.ch/publications/pdfs/Discussion-Points-5.pdf)

**Readings for Preparation of Day 3**

1. Building Collaborative Communities- An Essay by Scott London

www.scottlondon.com>oncollaboration

1. Dialogue Facilitation

[www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Other\_Resources/Ropers\_BasicsofDialogueFacilitation.pdf](http://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Other_Resources/Ropers_BasicsofDialogueFacilitation.pdf)

1. Manager’s Guide to Resolving Conflicts in Collaborative Networks

[www.uquebec.ca/observgo/fichiers/42245\_Guideconflicts.pdf](http://www.uquebec.ca/observgo/fichiers/42245_Guideconflicts.pdf)

1. Policy Dialogue and its Contribution to Informed Decision Making [www.who.int/alliance-hpsr/news/2014/PolicyDialogueNote.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/alliance-hpsr/news/2014/PolicyDialogueNote.pdf?ua=1)
2. Educational Policy Dialogue

[www.epdc.org/sites/default/files/documents/EQUIP2%20LL%20Policy%20Dialogue%20AAR.pdf](http://www.epdc.org/sites/default/files/documents/EQUIP2%20LL%20Policy%20Dialogue%20AAR.pdf)

1. OECD Policy Dialogue on Women’s Economic Empoverment and its Agenda

<https://www.oecd.org/development/Brochure_WEE_Recognising_Reducing_and_Redistributing_unpaid_care_and_domestic_work.pdf>

<http://www.oecd.org/development/gender-development/Agenda-OECD-Policy-Dialogue-25-January.pdf>

1. Agenda of Policy Dialogue on Women’s Economic Empowerment

**Recommended Readings:**

1. Peer mediation – Student Engagement Project

[www.K12engagement.unl.edu/strategy-briefs/Peer%20Mediation\_O.pdf](http://www.K12engagement.unl.edu/strategy-briefs/Peer%20Mediation_O.pdf)

1. International Conflict Resolution: From Practice to Knowledge and Back Again (Wanis, Ghais)

<https://www.american.edu/sis/ipcr/upload/Wanis-St-John-Ghais-Intl-Conflict-Resn-ch-56.pdf>

1. Mediating Conflicts with Religious Dimensions

[www.css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/pdfs/CARIM\_Mediating\_Conflicts.pdf](http://www.css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/pdfs/CARIM_Mediating_Conflicts.pdf)

1. Facilitator Tool Kit –University of Wisconsin –Madison <http://oqi.wisc.edu/resourcelibrary/uploads/resources/Facilitator%20Tool%20Kit.pdf>
2. The Challenges and Opportunities Confronting Modern Public Policy Mediators

[www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/dispute\_resolution\_magazin/winter2016/8\_Nolon\_Winter\_2016.authcheckdam.pdf](http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/dispute_resolution_magazin/winter2016/8_Nolon_Winter_2016.authcheckdam.pdf)