

SS4217: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND MEDIATION

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Conflict Management and Mediation

Subject Code

SS - Social and Behavioural Sciences

Course Number

4217

Academic Unit

Social and Behavioural Sciences (SS)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Instruction

English, supplemented by Chinese (Cantonese) in live demonstration, skills rehearsal, and role-play

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

The course will introduce students to the nature and causes of conflicts. Students will describe functions, strategies, and skills of negotiation and mediation. Training will be both theory-driven and skill-driven. The course aims to facilitate students to explain different types of theories of conflict escalation and management. Students will describe the relationships among power, rights and interests in the process of dispute resolution. Students will apply theories into practices.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

	CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	identify different categories of interpersonal conflicts and types of restorative practices in Hong Kong and overseas;	15	x		
2	describe different models of dispute resolution and conflict management;	20		x	
3	explain assumptions and major concepts of theories of negotiation and social bargaining;	25		x	
4	apply strategies and skills in conflict management and mediation;	20			x
5	evaluate strategic choice and steps in negotiation and mediation in a Chinese cultural context.	20			x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

	LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	LTA1: Lecture	There will be lectures on different models of disputes resolution and conflict management. With the help of PowerPoints, lecture notes and multi-media resources, students will describe basic concepts of major conflict management theories.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	

2	LTA2: Interactive exercises, worksheets and discussion	There will be case studies for discussion and role play exercises for students to act out the strategies and skills learnt. During the exercises, students will have small group discussion for sharing and mutual learning.	2, 3, 4, 5	
3	LTA3: Guest lecture	Guest speakers from relevant professional fields will be invited to share their experiences and demonstrate practical skills. Students are asked to act out skills taught in class and integrate theories into practices.	2, 4, 5	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	AT1: Interactive exercises, worksheets and discussion: Worksheets for identifying and analysing conflicts will be used. There will be interactive exercises for student to learn how to resolve conflicts. Students will engage in discussion and fill in worksheets when they are doing the exercises.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	25	-	Yes

2	AT2: Reflection Journal: Student will reflect their learning experience through a self-discovery journey. This assignment is meant to engage students in a self-reflective inquiry. The length of the reflection journal is around 1,000 words.	3, 4	25	-	Yes
3	AT3: Final Term Paper: Students will apply the knowledge and skills learned from this course. They will write up a paper (around 2500 words) to examine assumptions, process and skills of a model of conflict resolution/mediation.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	50	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Interactive exercises, worksheets and discussion

Criterion

Students are able to analyse cases based on knowledge learnt from the course. Arguments are linked to theories taught. Students participate in discussion and report back actively

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strongly able.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Highly able.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderately able.

Marginal (D)

Just able.

Failure (F)

Not able.

Assessment Task

2. Reflection Journal

Criterion

Students are able to reflect on what they have learnt over the past six weeks. They are able to identify strategies for practicing either negotiation or mediation.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strongly able.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Highly able.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderately able.

Marginal (D)

Just able.

Failure (F)

Not able.

Assessment Task

3. Final Term Paper

Criterion

This assignment is an integrated paper on students' understanding of the subject matter learning over the thirteen weeks. They are expected to draw on literature to enrich their discussion and illustrate their arguments by using a case.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strongly able.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Highly able.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderately able.

Marginal (D)

Just able.

Failure (F)

Not able.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Introduction: Understanding conflict, reconciliation, and restoration. Types of conflicts. The conflict cycle and possible consequences of different types of conflicts.

Theories of Conflict Management: A conceptual framework for understanding conflict and struggle. Theories of conflict escalation and change. Psychodynamic perspective, verbal aggressiveness, attribution theory, field theory, and game theory.

Crisis Management: Defining and understanding crisis. How to anticipate and deal with crisis. Preparation for an inevitable crisis. Handling crisis with care.

Negotiation and Dispute Resolution: Understanding power, rights and interests. What is a BATNA? Differentiate positions and interests. Probing for underlying interests. Alternatives to a negotiated agreement. Getting disputes resolved step by step. Communication skills for effective negotiation and dispute resolution.

Restorative Practices and Models of Mediation: History of restorative practices. Formal and informal models of restorative practices. Family group conferencing and circles. Introduction of different kinds of mediation models.

Skills in Mediation and Reconciliation: Differences and similarities between mediation and counselling. Skills in conferencing facilitation and mediation. Steps for mediation. Roles of mediator and facilitator. Procedures and guidelines for mediation. Agreement: restitution and reparation. Rehearsal of skills learnt through role-play and practices.

Mediation Process: Practices and Skills Training: Paths of healing and forgiving. Prepare environment and arrange seating. Issue identification and getting to yes. Develop win/win strategies. Getting beyond a negative response to a request. Emotional issues checklist. Rehearsal of skills learnt through role-play and practices.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Folger, J.P., Poole, M.S. & Stutman, R.K. (2021). Working Through Conflict: Strategies for Relationships, Groups and Organizations (9th Edition.). Routledge.
2	Thompson, L.L. (2020). The Mind and Heart of the Negotiator, 7th Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.
3	McCorkle, S. & Reese, M.J. (2018). Mediation Theory and Practice. SAGE Publications, Inc

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Brinkman, R. and Kirschner, R. (2012). Dealing with People You Can't Stand, 3rd Edition. New York: Mc-Graw-Hill, Inc.
2	Fisher R. & Ury W. (2012). Getting to Yes: Negotiating an Agreement without Giving in, 3rd Edition. Cornerstone
3	Irving, H.H. (2002). Family Mediation: Theory and Practice with Chinese Families. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
4	Ury W. (2003). Getting Past No: Negotiating with Difficulty People. Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group Inc
5	Wilmot, W.W. and Hocker, J.L. (2018). Interpersonal Conflict (10th Ed.). Boston: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.
6	Winslade, J. & Monk, G. (2000). Narrative Mediation: A New Approach to Conflict Resolution. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
7	Wong, D.S.W. & Kwan, K.Y (2020). Restorative justice for juvenile offenders in China: Current practices and challenges. China Journal of Social Work, 13(2), 127-137.
8	Wong, D.S.W and Tu, K.H.H. (2018). Restorative justice for delinquents in Hong Kong: current practices and challenges, Asian Pacific Journal of Social Work and Development, 28 (3): 178-191.