

# Advanced Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies

Professor Jay Rothman  
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## Course Description

This course examines crucial issues and particular cases of interest to advanced students in Peace and Conflict Studies through common readings and student projects. In the first half of the semester, various important theories of conflict and conflict management will be compared and program evaluation methods will be examined in preparation for semester-long field research. The second half of the semester will focus on student research projects with continued exploration of conflict resolution theories and applications. This course is required for Peace and Conflict Studies concentrators, and may be taken by others who have taken one of the following: General Studies 11 Ia, Interdepartmental 206, or Political Science 247a, or with special permission from Professor.

The course will consist of both theoretical comparisons of negotiation and mediation and applied evaluation research of existing mediation or negotiation programs. In consultation with the Professor, in teams of two, students will identify mediation or negotiation initiatives early in the semester in which the leaders are willing to be guided by them to engage in a process of reflexive monitoring and action-evaluation of their efforts. In preparation for this we will begin the semester with a packet of readings on evaluation research along with a prescriptive piece by the Professor on how to develop a reflexive process of evaluation for conflict resolution. We will then turn to the theoretical component of the course. We will compare and contrast various theories and methods of negotiation and mediation. We will begin with a negotiation text by Bazerman and Neale, *Negotiating Rationally* and several additional essays on the topic. Moving into mediation, we will next look at an essay by Susan Silby and Sally Engle Merry, "Mediator Settlement Strategies," that provides a general typology of the field of mediation by dividing it into two generalized categories: therapeutic mediation and problem solving mediation. We will then look at some depth at the mediators that broadly fit into the problem solving variety by reading Deborah Kolb's edited book *When Talk Works*, which surveys various styles of problem solving mediation through profiling the work and applied theories of over a dozen mediators. Next we will look at a book by Susan Heitler, a family therapist, *From Conflict to Resolution: Skills and Strategies for Individual, Couple and Family Therapy* which suggests how to usefully employ mediation skills and theories in therapy. We will then read a controversial book by Joseph Folger and Baruch Bush called *The Promise of Mediation* that seeks to walk the line between problem solving and therapy by suggesting that "transformation" should be mediation's goal. This will be supplemented by further readings about other transformative mediation approaches from the text *When Talk Works*.

In addition to an on-going reflexive and comprehensive research log that students will keep and turn in regularly prior to meetings with the Professor, the main requirement for this course will be the student's evaluation research paper and presentation of it at the end of the semester.

## Course Description

January 23- Introduction to course. Overview of action-research methodology, and theories of negotiation and mediation.

January 30 - Packet on evaluation and reflexive research.

February 6 - Evaluation research methods (cont.); reading grant proposals; select research site.

February 13 - *Negotiating Rationally* (Intro., parts one and two).

February 20 - Negotiating Rationally (part three).

February 27 - Susan Silby and Sally Engle Merry, "Mediator Settlement Strategies" (on reserve) and intro. to *When Talk Works*

March 5 - Varieties of Problem Solving Mediation - *When Talk Works*

March 12 - Spring vacation, no class

March 19 - Problem Solving Mediation (continued) *When Talk Works*

March 26 - Therapy as mediation text: *From Conflict to Resolution*

April 2 - Transformational Mediation - *The Promise of Mediation*

April 9 - Transformational Mediation (continued) - *The Promise of Mediation*. and readings from *When Talk Works*.

April 16 - Student Presentations

April 23 - Student Presentations