

CONFLICT RESOLUTION INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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International Practicum - Building Bridges for Peace teen inter-group intervention

CRI MASTERS PROGRAM STANDS OUT WITH NEW PRACTICUM SERIES

CRI students, Faculty, Advisory Board members and the conflict resolution community expressed their enthusiasm for CRI's first practicum series, which began this past spring. Students first participated in an interpersonal practicum in mediation, which provided all students with a solid foundation in practically applying the theory and skills learned in their coursework and internships. Students were then provided a focused opportunity to gain further experience in mediation or in environmental collaborative planning or international conflict resolution, depending on their individual interests.

CRI Co-Director Tamra Pearson d'Estrée explains why these practicums were added to the program, "The CRI faculty has long felt that what was missing in MA-level education in Conflict Resolution was an apprenticeship experience, where students are supervised doing the actual practice (not simulation) by experienced practitioner faculty members. Simulations have their usefulness in teaching and training, but there is no substitute for actual practice in preparing professionals."

The concept behind the practicum curriculum is to provide students many opportunities to integrate theory and practice through actual practice: moving through the process of designing processes and interventions, planning the implementation, execution, and evaluating the results. Therefore students must first complete the Conflict Resolution MA program core curriculum, which includes a classic 40-hour mediation training.

The CRI Advisory Board, which contains several practitioners in the field, immediately saw the value of such practicums, both in terms of helping students develop connections with various practitioners and programs and increasing the marketability of our graduates by providing opportunities to gain 'real-world' experience while still in school. International practicum student Suzie Wagner added, "the practicum showed how interpersonal conflict resolution skills learned in class relate to international conflict resolution work and peace writ large, how the local might influence the global."

While the MA program has long required an internship, which allows students to focus on their primary areas of interest and target specific organizations, the practicum adds something unique. "While internships expose students to actual practice settings, they are often more like observers, and the type of experience they obtain from these settings varies widely. In order to provide the experience students need to be employable when they graduate, CRI offers the practicum as an intensive supervised apprenticeship," said d'Estrée.

Students also learn a lot about themselves. One student said she "learned in practice what it means to need self care, and what self care for me really looks like. I need to have personal connections that allow me to vent the emotions I experience, and to do that venting often."

Although students are not expected to achieve full competency through the practica, the consensus in academia and among CRI's own Advisory Board members, is that this new curriculum

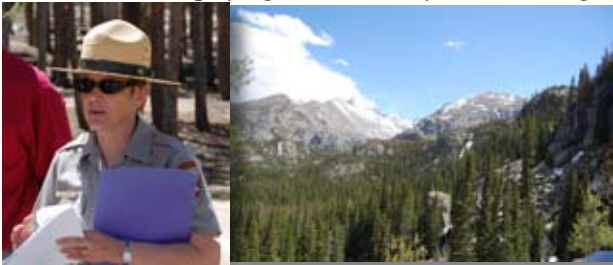
CRI PRACTICUM COURSES (CONT.)

component will result in graduates with the kind of clinical experience that makes them stand out in a competitive job market.

Interpersonal Track

All graduate students began the practicum by solidifying their conflict resolution skills in the interpersonal course, taught by CRI Professors Ruth Parsons and Cynthia Savage. This course provided opportunities for students to first observe mediation services at Jefferson County Mediation Services (JCMS), then to conduct co-mediation themselves while being supervised by the instructors. Cases ranged from parenting time to business contracts to landlord-tenant disputes. The corresponding seminar provided students with a forum to share their experiences, to learn from each other and to relate their prior course work to their new mediation practice. Profs. Parsons and Savage were there throughout, helping them face the unexpected challenges that arise for new practitioners and develop their skills in reflection and evaluation that will continue to help them throughout their careers.

Students reported they liked the structure using co-mediation. Because they worked with different students throughout the course, they were able to learn more from each other. Use of the reflective practice guides provided by Profs. Parsons and Savage helped students “understand in the moment how their actions affected other people” as well as help them identify their interests and overcome their fear of making mistakes because the guides allowed them to “acknowledge them and move on.” “Ruth and Cindy helped theory come alive so the students could really learn it,” said one student. Other students called the experience “transforming” and expressed a willingness to help the next cohort of students in their role-playing exercises or by co-mediating.



RMNP Ranger Judy Visty and RMNP

Environmental Track

Students opting for the environmental track worked under CRI Professor Laura Kaplan to help staff at Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP) develop their strategies to manage the park as an official Wilderness Area -- a status recently granted to the Park by the U.S. Congress. This project allowed students to gain experience in the collaborative planning side of conflict resolution, applying more of the theories and skills they have

learned in the MA program.

These skills are critical in large-scale projects in which no particular person or team is in charge, as is the case for the RMNP overall strategic plan. The CRI team is helping the RMNP staff think through the steps in putting together the overall plan to achieve their goals. Because the new Wilderness Area has a specific definition, RMNP is using the CRI team's help in examining the many operating systems within the Park so they can better monitor and evaluate the four qualities in the definition: low human imprint on environment, provides outstanding opportunities for solitude, is at least five thousand acres of land, and contains ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

One of the challenges faced by this track is the nature of working on a longer-term project with an actual client as they often do not operate on the academic quarter structure. Environmental practicum students report they learned the importance of being flexible to meet their client's needs.

International Track

Students with an interest in international conflict resolution work had the opportunity to work with Seeking Common Ground Executive Director Erin Breeze on the organization's inter-group intervention program called Building Bridges for Peace. This program brings together Israeli, Palestinian and American teens for a summer camp in the Colorado mountains during which participants acquire skills in communications, cooperation and cohabitation, so they can become agents of change in their daily lives.

Practicum participant Wagner and her fellow practicum participants led the students through an exercise entitled “Biography of the Other;” She found the experience very rewarding: “we could see a change in the participants just from the morning until evening.”

Gaining practical experience facilitating in international conflict usually requires going abroad, and is still recommended for students with this particular interest, but this practicum allows students to start practicing right here in Colorado. d'Estrée explains the experience, “Our students go through many of the same experiences the camp staff go through to prepare them to work with teens from groups in conflict. They help to design assessment tools to monitor what is happening in the encounter and the kind of changes campers experience. And they learn how the various exercises they watch campers going through together are rooted in various theories of change and of intergroup relations.” Practical theory and informed practice come together.

-- Autumn Gorman

RELIGION & CONFLICT SYMPOSIUM

Under what conditions do religious leaders serve to justify or catalyze violence along identity lines that divide contemporary societies, and under what conditions do religious leaders lay the foundation for, advocate, and sometimes directly mediate for peace? The Conflict Resolution Institute together with the Center for Sustainable Development and International Peace (CSDIP) and the Josef Korbel School of International Studies and the Iliff School of Theology recently co-hosted a symposium to begin to answer these questions. The symposium, held at the Daniel L. Ritchie Center, brought scholars from around the world to discuss the development of new upper-division undergraduate and graduate-level course curricula.

The effort was part of a larger project titled: *Religious Leaders and Conflict Management in Deeply Divided Societies*, funded by the Henry Luce Foundation's Initiative on Religion in International Affairs, which explores the role that religious leaders play in the creation or cessation of violence in deeply divided societies.

The first track of the project explored how religious leaders construct the relationship between doctrine and human rights, define identities (exclusive versus inclusive), articulate the relationship between religion, governance and state policy, justify and/or mobilize for war (the use of violence) through rhetoric, and spoil the peace process or directly mediate.

The second track explored the policy implications of the findings from the first track. That dialogue produced discussion about how religious leaders can "promote tolerance, prevent violence and make peace, and build peace in the wake of war," with an emphasis on how

the international community's engagement (or lack of engagement) with religious leaders can influence the outcome of interventions in conflict.

This symposium, titled *Religion and Global Issues in the 21st Century: Implications for Teaching and Learning*, and subsequent curricula were the third track of the three-year project, titled. The project partners may then take the finalized curricula from the Symposium as a foundation for a new specialization in religion and conflict management in their programs. The six course modules developed as a part of this symposium included:



Global scholars participating in symposium to develop curricula for Religion and Conflict Management in Deeply Divided Societies

- Religious Traditions and Contemporary Human Rights
- Religion, the State and Governance in the 21st Century
- Religion War and Peace Process
- Religion and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding
- Religion and the Environment
- Religion and Development

The symposium commissioned the development of syllabi for each of the

course titles and the draft syllabi were then discussed during the symposium. The development process included group discussions in which scholars presented their course modules to other scholars in a variety of fields. The scholars then offered suggested improvements and critiques of the modules presented. The intellectual, cultural, and geographic diversity of the scholars taking part in these discussions provided for stimulating debate about the intersections and efficacy of various fields involved in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Several DU Conflict Resolution MA students were able to take part in this part of the process.

A highlight of the symposium was a public dinner and a keynote address by Dr. Rama Mani, activist, policy advisor, and Senior Research Associate with the University of Oxford Centre for International Studies. The keynote speech addressed the role in which religion plays in both fueling conflict and creating and sustaining peace. Although some religions can become obstacles to resolving conflict, Dr. Mani argued that religions can also change in ways that make them peacebuilders.

In an effort to make the most practical

RELIGION & CONFLICT SYMPOSIUM - (CONT.)

use of the rich academic interaction at the symposium, the materials for these courses – syllabi, readings, multimedia, and web guides - will be made available on a website currently being developed by CSDIP. This web-based resource center will create a space for these ma-

terials to be accessed by instructors and institutions at home and abroad. The site will also include the opportunity for scholars to interact by commenting, sharing information, and using discussion boards. In this way, the symposium demonstrates the commitment by

all the institutions involved to a multi-disciplinary, collaborative approach to improving the field of Peace and Conflict studies.

-- Fernando Ospina & Suzie Wagner

CONGRATS TO NEW CRI GRADS

The Conflict Resolution Institute is proud to announce the graduates of the 2009-2010 academic year -- our largest class yet. We wish them all well and encourage them to stay in touch with us at cri@du.edu, as well as to stay in touch with classmates through the **new CRI Alumni Association**, the formation of which is being led by our featured alum in this newsletter, Brian Beck. Congratulations to everyone, and a special congratulations to best thesis award winner Kate Zimmerly, for her thesis on *Georgia: Frozen Conflict and the Role of Displaced Persons*.

Katie Arnst
 Brian Beck
 Alana Berland
 Brooke Breazeale
 Travis Caldwell
 Charles Cobb
 Katherine Coleman
 Petula Fernandes McShiras
 Rena Gardenswartz
 Joseph Gary
 Holly Guthrey
 Hafsteinn Hafsteinsson

Matt Haynes
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 Cory Stufflebeem
 Shana Tabatcher
 Gretchen Vollrath-Sharkey
 Kimberly VanKirk
 Elliott Wynne
 Luke Yoder



Best thesis award winner Kate Zimmerly (MA '09) with Karen Feste; CRI student Fernando Ospina; graduates, faculty, alumni and guests at the June 3 commencement and alumni reception at the new Sié Center.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT - CYNTHIA FUKAMI



Cynthia Fukami, Professor, Department of Management, Daniels College of Business and a member of CRI's faculty.

Daniels College of Business Professor of Management Cynthia Fukami started working in conflict resolution primarily in the field of labor relations, having earned her M.A. degree in organizational behavior from the University of Illinois Institute of Labor & Industrial Relations. Her Ph.D. is also in organizational behavior though her work focused more on employee relations. She is a Fellow of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and was a Carnegie Scholar for The Carnegie Teaching Academy.

Prof. Fukami became one of the first members of the Conflict Resolution Institute core faculty, which started forming in 1998. Director Prof. Karen Feste invited her to join due to her expertise in conflict in organizational dynamics -- a course required for all conflict resolution students, as well as her expertise in negotiation and labor relations, areas which hold the interest of many CRI students.

Conflict resolution skills are further developed Prof. Fukami's courses on Strategic Human Resources, her Executive MBA course on Power and Influence and a course on Leadership, Teams and Values which involves sailing the British Virgin Islands while living in very close quarters. Before they depart, she advises students to say what is bugging them early and often to avoid the build-up of resentment which typically results in a more explosive conflict later. As a Carnegie Scholar for The Carnegie Teaching Academy, Prof. Fukami worked on projects that explored better ways to use teams in classrooms, and she stresses the importance of early team building to create an environment of openness and supportiveness so issues can be addressed productively. Unfortunately, not everyone is responsive to this approach. She is occasionally sent students from other classes who were involved in conflicts that had already escalated beyond any hope in creating such an environment due to their reluctance to discuss things early and often.

Prof. Fukami's current research is in scholarship of teaching and learning. This fall, Fukami will be on sabbatical to study scholarship for teaching in learning in Asia. As Editor for *The SAGE Handbook of Management Learning, Education and Development* (2009), she noticed there were no authors from this important region. Some of the questions her research will address include: Do universities in Asia devote resources to teaching and learning? Why or why not? And if so, why the disconnect with the work being performed and published in the West? During her sabbatical, Fukami will be visiting a Center for Teaching and Learning in Taiwan and explore

the topic further in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Kyoto and Taipei. Typically scholarship in teaching and learning in the West requires a very collaborative methodology between students and professors, but in many Asian cultures, there is a much greater power distance between students and professors, so how would such methodologies be different?

One element that exists across all cultures is that in business, everyone negotiates every day, even though what and how negotiations take place can differ widely. But Prof. Fukami finds beauty in conflict resolution as it is a skill that can continually be improved. She recommends every student read William Ury's *Getting to Yes* because she sees how easy it is to find collaborative solutions if the right attitudes and approaches are there. Success in business in the future will require a more collaborative/less competitive approach. For non-business students or those who do not see the value in such skills professional, she says this book at the very least will help future parents negotiate with their children.

Professor Cynthia Fukami can be reached at cfukami@du.edu

-- Autumn Gorman

ALUMNI IN THE FIELD

Brian Beck: Jefferson County Mediation Services

Brian Beck, who recently graduated from the conflict resolution institute this past winter after completing his thesis, is currently the Systems Manager at Jefferson County Mediation Services (JCMS). In general, Brian takes on the responsibility of 'selling' mediation. More specifically, he spends time talking to parties or people that may be interested in mediation, answering questions about mediation and discussing how mediation may be beneficial to different organizations within the county. Brian is also responsible for managing court calendars, website updates and working on increasing the use of technology in mediation settings. This includes having computers in all meeting spaces, digitizing forms (e.g. agreements to mediate, memorandums of understanding) and developing video conferencing capabilities. Because JCMS operates with a flat organizational structure, various people take on responsibilities that fit their interests or skill sets.

Brian's degree in conflict resolution was immensely helpful in getting him where he is today. One thing that helped was the networking opportunities that came up while in school. Brian first connected with Jeff Co. at a networking event put on by the students, where he met director Mark Loye and eventually started working on a database project for the organization. The degree helped him land a position directly related to the field of conflict resolution and also expanded his networking opportunities within the field. Of course, the degree from DU grounded Brian in a sound understanding of the conflict resolution field, specifically related to mediation. This has helped him identify areas



Brian Beck

where JCMS could expand within the community in resolving various conflicts.

Brian enjoys his position at JCMS and not only appreciates seeing the positive impact that JCMS has on the community, but also the potential it could have. JCMS handles a wide range of cases. From neighbor-neighbor disputes, child custody to Division T small claims court cases, the variety is huge. JCMS has handled 8,548 cases since its inception in 1994, with 5,984 reaching a satisfactory settlement. This has provided the county with an invaluable service for solving conflict that is cost effective. This is in large part due to the dedication of the volunteer mediators and small JCMS staff. In terms of growing, Brian is working hard on getting the JCMS services involved in the schools by showing how mediation and facilitation may be beneficial to the

districts in the county. Specifically, he sees a great need for helping parents resolve conflicts in connection to the conflicts that their children are having in school. It is a difficult challenge to market the services to the schools, but one that Brian enjoys. One of JCMS's great selling points is the fact that the services offered are free, which is a word government municipalities appreciate in a time when budgets are tight.

In terms of making it out there in these tough times, Brian has some sound advice for current and recently graduated students. As there are not a lot of specific jobs in the conflict resolution field, Brian believes it is important to network in areas beyond conflict resolution. This is critical in helping organizations see the benefits of a student's conflict resolution skills and helping students find a particular niche. Also, be involved in volunteer opportunities or internship opportunities but don't take on projects that aren't fulfilling your specific goals. Because the application of conflict resolution is broad, it is important to make it your own and stay focused on where you, as an emerging specialist, want to see conflict resolved differently in society.

-- Jonathan Howard

CRI Co-DIRECTOR KAREN FESTE'S NEW BOOK



Now available from Paradigm Publishers:

Terminate Terrorism: Framing, Gaming, and Negotiating Conflicts

by Karen A. Feste

INTERNSHIPS

Brooke Breazeale

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Since September, 2009, Brooke Breazeale has been working in Paris as an intern at the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). The INEE is a division of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), whose mission is to contribute to “the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information.” Their goal is to provide “quality and safe education in emergencies and post-crises recovery.”

Brooke works as a consultant for the INEE Working Group for Education and Fragility, “assisting with coordination and facilitation of activities, supporting advocacy, and strengthening consensus on what works to mitigate fragility through quality education while ensuring equitable access for all.” For Brooke, there is never a typical day at the office. Each day comes with a variety of activities and tasks that can entail drafting briefs, developing extensive resource lists for their network, reviewing reports, guidance notes or articles for the INEE Secretariat, or planning logistics for our meetings.

Brooke has been able to utilize her conflict resolution skills at INEE in multiple ways. Aside from the usefulness of knowing effective communication skills, which mitigates tension and allows for creative and constructive discussions, she has also been approached for her conflict mitigation lens to feed into various initiatives. But what Brooke has enjoyed most about the internship is learning the processes in which policies are developed and implemented.

Brooke was able to land the internship in part due to

the connection between the Conflict Resolution master’s program and the Josef Korbel School of International Studies, also at the University of Denver. By being a part of the Korbel School, Brooke was exposed to various government agencies and sectors that desired conflict resolution students.

Brooke’s work at INEE will lead to a full time position after she graduates this August. She is working with advisor CRI Prof. Timothy Sisk to complete her thesis *Transforming Colombia’s Conflict: A case for re-prioritizing U.S.-Colombia’s Militaristic Approach*. She plans to stay with INEE until December and then move elsewhere. Currently she does not have anything set for 2011, but she would like to work with “advocacy and implementation of transformative education approaches in conflict-affected and fragile states.”

For students currently seeking internships, Brooke had the following advice: “Don’t give up and be diligent with the application process. I applied various times and became so discouraged. I almost did not even apply for this internship but decided to at the last minute! I would also advise students to do their research on the organization to which they are applying...I really think that is what made the difference.”

-- Joseph Vincent



Brooke Breazeale enjoying her internship with INEE in Paris

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Stay Informed and Join the Conversation

Join our facebook group to be aware of upcoming conferences and other local, regional & national developments in the conflict resolution field. You can also join in discussions on hot topics.

If you would like us to include your event, please e-mail cricrp@du.edu.

TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

The Georgian people are known for two things: their hospitality and their resilience. After centuries of various invasions and empires, they have survived with their culture, their language and their identity intact, with lessons to teach us all in how to adapt and persevere. We had the privilege this spring and summer of wrapping up our USAID/Higher Education for Development-funded project with Tbilisi State University (TSU) to establish their university-based mediation clinic. Our colleagues there persevered through the challenge of continuing project training and activities after the summer 2008 war with Russia, providing new ways of approaching conflict to families, businesspeople, university staff, and government leaders alike (see Fall 2008 newsletter).

The co-directors of the joint project, Prof. Guguli Magradze of TSU and CRI's Prof. Tamra Pearson d'Estrée, met in Washington DC in the spring to finalize plans for evaluating both the clinic and the project itself. Prof. d'Estrée's experience working with American community mediation centers (see Winter 2005 news-

letter) informed the development of practices for data gathering, review, and ongoing improvement for clinic staff and procedures. The clinic's evaluation plan will be posted as a resource on CRI's new and improved website, slated for unveiling in 2011.

Project goals were met or exceeded, including: new training, expanded curricula, and institutionalized conflict resolution services. The project also developed local expertise, validated local historical wisdom in conflict resolution processes, developed a Georgian-language training manual and texts. Added benefits included physical expansion of the Mediation Clinic at TSU, Georgian-language web-based resources, and a formal association with the Georgian Bar Association. CRI is now working with TSU to take this partnership one step further in a new project that will bring conflict resolution skills into the curriculum of primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Georgia.

-- Tamra Pearson d'Estrée

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