

M.A. Degree in Conflict Resolution

Korbel School of International Studies
University of Denver



Student Handbook
2014-2015

A word from the Program Director....

The world is full of turmoil and social tension—from disputes in the workplace to incidents of family related violence; from school bullying to neighborhood arguments; from politics to terrorism to war. Divisiveness, anger, and rage prey on our fears, sap our energy, and limit the development of humanity. These petulant conditions exist to a large extent because the forces of social life play to power politics and conflict escalation. Such strategies dominate creative non-adversarial, de-escalation processes that would bring calmness and efficiency into our world. The problem is not necessarily one of deliberately choosing to fight rather than engaging in useful dialogue and discussion. Rather, the problem stems from instinct, ignorance and the lack of technical tools for activating conflict resolution processes.

Conflict Resolution is a mindset, an analytic perspective, and a set of skills emphasizing critical thinking and creative approaches to solving social problems. At the broadest level, it is designed to structure a sense of stability and security to build energy and enhance human progress.

Conflict Resolution understanding and skills are necessary to global survival in the 21st Century! At the Conflict Resolution Institute we emphasize a broad approach to human cooperation—in politics, professional work, and personal relations—to promote unified understanding that helps build skills and experience through mediation, negotiation, and facilitation leading to practical application.

Throughout your graduate education, be mindful of the intellectual rewards of studying Conflict Resolution and consider how your training will make an impact on the world, but remember as well, the procedural features of University life that will help you reach that point. That's the purpose of this booklet.

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What is Conflict Resolution?

Conflict resolution examines environmental and contextual aspects of social relations in confronting problem solving, the tactics used to transform disputes between parties, and new directions of social cooperation.

The emerging field of conflict resolution was one of the major intellectual influences leading to the establishment of the United States Institute of Peace in 1984. By an act of Congress, such an institution “would be the most efficient and immediate means for the Nation to enlarge its capacity to promote the peaceful resolution of international conflict.”

Disputant positions in a conflict depend on ideology, power, and goals. Low-power groups may not call for conflict resolution or peace; they want empowerment, change, and justice. More powerful parties may opt to deter, suppress, repress, or control conflict. They want to maintain the status quo. Third-party interveners (Conflict Resolvers) attempt to manage, regulate, and settle conflicts.

Our Mission

The Conflict Resolution Institute
Linking Scholar-Practitioner Relations

Our Educational Pledge

To teach Conflict Resolution theory and skills
To promote cross-learning connection of ideas

Our Research Pledge

To develop Conflict Resolution concepts and methods
To promote justice and fairness

Our Community Involvement Pledge

To nurture reflective Conflict Resolution practice
To integrate students and graduates into the community

Professional Training

The M.A. in Conflict Resolution prepares students for positions of leadership in management, negotiation, and mediation at all levels—from institutional building in developing societies, to corporate settings, and from local government to international organizations and diplomacy. Students who complete the degree will have: (a) an understanding of social problems that allow them to foresee, analyze, and implement trends in conflict management; (b) a set of technical skills to display creativity in constructing problem solving settings; and (c) an increased social awareness of conflict resolution complexities in culturally diverse groups. The following professional positions in the private sector, government, and non-profit fields are suitable for someone with conflict resolution expertise.

Mediator: a third party who helps parties in conflict find solutions to their issues and problems thru Alternative Dispute Resolution.

Manager: organizes people in team-work, tasks, time-scheduling, and events. Job requires multiple level coordination activity

Planner: analyzes resources, human needs, in social-political-economic climate to structure frameworks for best use of resources in a realistic, mutually acceptable form.

Counselor: coaching, caretaking, and therapeutic advice to help individuals solve problems they face in interpersonal relations, at the workplace or schools.

Trainer: workshop leaders and facilitators for groups of managers and employees who provide training in Alternative Dispute Resolution techniques.

Career Services

JKSIS Career Web www.gsiscareerweb.com: online job, internship and fellowship listings. Access to career resources and Alumni Career Connections volunteers. For current students and alumni only! You must sign up on the JKSIS Career Web BEFORE you utilize career services. *Please Note:* If you wish to use the Career Center Assistance offered by the Korbel School, for personal counseling and attention, it is mandatory that you attend the three-hour Workshop sponsored by the Center during Fall Quarter orientation. Everyone who has participated will be able to seek assistance from the Center, but not otherwise.

M.A. Degree Curriculum (62 quarter hours of graduate credit)

Core Courses (27 credits required)

- INTS 4920 Conflict and Conflict Resolution (5 credits)
- CRES 4221 Negotiation Theory and Practice (3 credits)
- CRES 4222 Mediation Theory and Issues (5 credits)
- CRES 4225 Conciliation and Reconciliation (5 credits)
- COMN 4310 Communication and Collaboration (5 credits)
- MGMT 4620 Leadership and Organizational Dynamics (4 credits)

Practical and Professional Techniques (4 credits required)

- COMM 4701 40-Hour Mediation Training - through University College (4 credits)
- CRES 4961 Professional Development (0 credit)

Methodology Training (5 credits required)

- CRES 4111 Reflective Practice and Evaluation (5 credits)

Special Topics (12 credits required; select 4 courses from list below)

Internship (required)

- CRES 4981 Internship (0-5 variable credits)

Practicum (3 credits required)

- CRES 4971 Practicum (3 credits)

Thesis (optional) (up to 5 credits)

- CRES 4995 Thesis Research (0-5 maximum variable credits)

Core Courses

Purpose: To become familiar with academic concepts and theories, research and empirical findings; plus practical techniques applied to Conflict Resolution.

INTS 4920 Conflict and Conflict Resolution (5 credits)

A course focusing on literature drawn from diplomatic history, sociology, psychology, organizational behavior, and international politics; on theories of conflict and conflict resolution, including holistic approaches, socio-cultural conditioning and norms, and personality influences as alternative means to understanding negotiation and bargaining in varying contexts. Students apply practical fundamentals of negotiation and particular problem-solving techniques. *Take first term of enrollment.*

CRES 4221 Negotiation Theory & Practice (3 credits)

The course presents the theoretical groundwork for understanding the nature, strategy and tactics of various negotiation approaches including the role of time, information and power in negotiation situations, and an understanding of the way ethics, perceptions, and communication forms affect negotiation process and outcomes. *Take first term of enrollment.*

CRES 4222 Mediation Theory and Issues (5 credits)

An analysis and critique of the nature and role of third parties in conflict intervention, including conciliator, arbitrator, facilitator, monitor, and trainer. Theoretical perspectives and case studies are used to understand the situations where third parties operate, what values and resources they bring, and how power issues affect mediator functioning. Ethical guidelines are also considered. *Prerequisite: INTS 4920*

CRES 4225 Conciliation and Reconciliation (5 credits)

Builds on concepts and themes introduced in Mediation Theory and Issues, including further analysis and critique of the roles of third parties in conflict intervention. Values, motives, resources, and third-party competencies are considered, along with ethical guidelines and the issues of power, neutrality, gender, and culture as they affect third-party functioning. *Prerequisite: CRES 4222*

COMN 4310 Communication and Collaboration* (5 credits)

A review of contemporary theories and applications. Please note: As a Conflict Resolution student, you are not always guaranteed registration in advance and may be waitlisted until the term begins.*COMN 4020 Relational Communications or COMN 4700 Identity and Relationships (5 credits each) may be substituted, although students are *strongly* encouraged to take COMN 4310.

MGMT 4620 Leadership and Organizational Dynamics* (4 credits)

Focuses on development of management skills in organizations. This course brings together concepts from organizational behavior, organization dynamics, change management, and dispute resolution.

*Please contact Lisa Bradley, Graduate Academic Services at Daniels for special permission to register for this class (gradbus-advise@du.edu).

Practical and Professional Training

Purpose: To learn how to apply mediation processes in a practical setting and be exposed to the skills, values, and norms needed to perform professional roles in the Practitioner community.

COMM 4701 40-Hour Mediation Training (4 credits)

A workshop through University College taught as a 5-day intensive training, allowing the student practical applications and evaluation of their work. This course meets the State of Colorado certification requirements to practice as a mediator. Register through University College (contact Molly Rogers at 303-871-3857). Ucol enrollment and tuition is separate from DU traditional rates—the 12-18 flat fee does not apply, nor do overload fees.

CRES 4961 Professional Development (0 credit)

A socialization experience to develop specialized knowledge and lessons learned through association with mentors, networking with practitioners, and observing conflict resolution processes. A student enrolls for Professional Development each academic term (fall, winter, spring terms) and is assigned a grade of “P” in the final quarter of registration once all documentation is submitted. *Note:* the University does not grant graduate level credit for such training.

Methodology Training

Purpose: To learn how to conduct conflict assessment; how to structure an investigation of conflict resolution issues; and how to analyze data.

CRES 4111 Reflective Practice and Evaluation (5 credits)

A course designed to teach the tools for making conflict theories of practice explicit—including observation methods and interviewing techniques and preparing a grant proposal; to explore different methodologies for testing theories; and to examine ways that research modifies theory.

Special Topics

Purpose: To explore conflict resolution innovations primarily in practical applications.

CRES 4333 Resolving Contentious Public Issues (5 credits)

The course examines the range of processes used to address environmental and public policy conflict, noting the tradeoffs in matters of substance, and resolution procedures. Negotiation and mediation approaches are studied along with ethical issues.

CRES 4400 Restorative Justice (3 credits)

The course explores four leading Restorative Justice practices—Victim-Offender Mediation, Conferencing, Talking Circles, and Truth Commissions—to understand how needs of victims are addressed, and embracing notions of forgiveness, reconciliation and social healing within a set of principles based on social justice.

CRES 4410 Intractable Conflict (3 credits)

The course is focused on factors that lead to intractability, along with strategies for violence prevention and conflict transformation. Conflict mapping and analysis, sources of intractability, and social, psychological, economic and political dimensions of intractable conflicts are examined.

CRES 4420 Negotiation Difficulties (3 credits)

A course emphasizing pitfalls and obstacles to successful negotiation strategies.

CRES 4840 Managing Organizational Conflict (3 credits)

This course looks at a broad range of conflict in organizations that may involve gender, race, age, disability and other issues, to develop systems of management and evaluation.

CRES 4850 Creating Agreement (3 credits)

This course examines the development of criteria necessary for creating satisfactory and acceptable agreements involving multiple parties through a series of case studies that link negotiation theory and praxis.

CRES 4860 Public Forum Facilitation (3 credits)

This course examines the tools of advocacy, debate, dialogue and deliberation through the lens of facilitation in public forums. Diverse democracies require high quality communication to function well. However, polarization, cynicism and apathy have become the norm obstructing collaborative problem-solving. What are the best processes for making public decisions in a democracy?

CRES 4870 Conflict Vulnerability Assessment (3 credits)

This course guides students seeking to specialize in early warning and conflict prevention approaches at the community, societal, or country level through the contemporary scholar literature and policy-related instruments and models that seek to define and measure “conflict vulnerability.”

CRES 4880 Grant Writing: The Research Proposal and Conflict Analysis (3 credits)

A course in research methods anchored in evidence-based policy, including quantitative and qualitative techniques for building facts and findings from context-free, context-rich, and colloquial environments designed to support informed decision-making. Students learn the mechanics of preparing a research or program proposal for government or foundation support.

Internship and Practicum

Purpose: to gain practical experience. The internship provides exposure to the practical world of Conflict Resolution and is supervised by a practitioner from outside the university; the practicum provides an integrative experience where students bring together the knowledge and skills acquired in the Conflict Resolution curriculum and is supervised by a faculty member at DU. An internship often means observing and assisting to learn about conflict resolution environments. The practicum means directly engaging as a full participant, for example, forming official agreements between disputing parties.

Internship Requirement: All candidates for the M.A. degree in Conflict Resolution must complete an internship. The work undertaken once a student matriculates in the graduate program (i.e. prior work experience will not fulfill the requirement) must be approved in advance by the Graduate Director. A student must work at least 100 hours in an internship position.

Proof of Internship completion: a student prepares and submits a report of the experience (3-5 pages) to the Graduate Director and secures a recommendation letter from the internship supervisor summarizing and evaluating work completed sent directly to the Graduate Director. Please note: if you have a campus GRA or GTA at the University of Denver, this experience, while valuable, is not eligible for meeting your internship requirement.

CRES 4981 Internship. (0-5 credits)

A student may enroll for credit any quarter and repeatedly register for the same course designation over a different academic term for a maximum of 5 credits toward the degree. Registration for internship requires a special paper form that must be signed by the Graduate Director, and submitted by the student to the registrar. Once the internship has been completed, and documented by the student’s report and supervisor’s letter, a grade of “P” for “passing is submitted to the registrar.

Practicum Requirement. All candidates for the M.A. degree in Conflict Resolution must complete a practicum. The work, once a student has completed most of the core curriculum courses plus the mediation workshop (mandatory), *consists of a 15-week period—Spring term plus 5 weeks in early Summer*—where students meet weekly with the professor to discuss the design, execution, and evaluation of conflict resolution interventions based on the cases they are assigned. It is divided into 2 sections—the basic practicum for all and an advanced practicum where students are divided into groups depending on their specific substantive interests: Interpersonal, Environmental, Public Policy, International.

Proof of Practicum completion: a student prepares a reflections report of the experience, a summary of what the student did, their strengths and weaknesses (3-5 pages) and submits it to the Graduate Director. and (2) the faculty supervisor submits an evaluation of the student's practicum work to the Graduate Director.

CRES 4971 Practicum. (3 credits)

A student may enroll for Practicum upon completion of most core courses plus the mediation workshop. The practicum is a culminating experience that allows student to understand how a dispute can be resolved or transformed through non-violent, collaborative means. It includes supervised practice, classroom evaluation and discussion, and supporting activities. A letter grade (A-F) is assigned by the faculty supervisor(s) once all requirements have been met.

M.A. Thesis (optional)

Purpose: To demonstrate a student's ability to do an extended piece of research and analysis in an integrative experience.

Candidates for the M.A. degree in Conflict Resolution may choose to prepare a thesis, a manuscript that usually runs between 100-150 pages of text. A thesis is written under the direction of a professor chosen by the student and graded by the professor with a letter grade. The thesis advisor must be a permanent member of the University of Denver faculty in Conflict Resolution; adjuncts and University College instructors are ineligible. An oral defense is scheduled after the thesis is given preliminary acceptance. The defense committee consists of three faculty members—a chair plus two others including the formal thesis advisor from the core faculty.

CRES 4995 MA Thesis Research (0- 5 credits)

This course allows a student to receive credit for work undertaken as part of thesis preparation. Thesis credit is optional, and “variable” meaning a student may register for 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 credits (the maximum allowed). Registration for M.A. thesis requires a special paper form signed by the Graduate Director, and submitted by the student to the registrar. After a student successfully passes the oral thesis defense and without further revisions required in the manuscript, the student's advisor submits a letter grade.

Program Statement

The Program Statement outlines a tentative schedule of courses, internship, practicum, and thesis to be completed for curriculum requirements. It must be submitted to the Graduate Director at the time you apply for graduation. Follow the sample below.

Program Statement (sample)

Name: Jane Roe
Enrolled: September 2014
Graduation target: November 2015 (15 months)

Career Objective: Human Resource Director for a Non-Profit Organization
Previous Education: B.A. Sociology, University of Colorado, 2010
Degree Program: M.A. in Conflict Resolution (62 quarter credits)

<u>Core Courses</u>		<u>27 credits</u>	<u>Term</u>
INTS 4920	Conflict and Conflict Resolution	5 credits	Fall
COMN 4310	Communication and Collaboration	5 credits	Fall
CRES 4221	Negotiation Theory and Practice	3 credits	Fall
CRES 4961	Professional Development	0 credit	All
CRES 4222	Mediation Theory and Issues	5 credits	Winter
MGMT 4620	Leadership and Organizational Dynamics	4 credits	Winter
CRES 4225	Conciliation and Reconciliation	5 credits	Spring
<u>Practical Technique Course</u>		<u>4 credits</u>	
COMM 4701	40 Hour Mediation Training	4 credits	Winter
<u>Methodology Course</u>		<u>5 credits</u>	
CRES 4111	Reflective Practice and Evaluation	5 credits	Fall (year 2)
<u>Specialized Topics Courses</u>		<u>14 credits</u>	
CRES 4333	Resolving Contentious Public Issues	5 credits	Fall
CRES 4410	Intractable Conflict	3 credits	Winter
CRES 4400	Restorative Justice	3 credits	Spring
CRES 4420	Negotiation Difficulties	3 credits	Spring
<u>Internship</u>		<u>4 credits</u>	
CRES 4981	Internship	2 credits	Winter
CRES 4981	Internship	2 credits	Spring
<u>Practicum</u>		<u>3 credits</u>	
CRES 4971	Practicum	3 credits	Spring
<u>Electives</u>		<u>5 credits</u>	
INTS 4517	Politics of Deeply Divided Societies	5 credits	Fall (year 2)
<u>Total</u>		<u>62 credits</u>	

Graduate Director Signature _____ Date _____