

# **Developing Mediation Skills**

Spring Quarter 2019

The Evergreen State College

Syllabus

## Class Meetings Spring 2019

5-9pm, Friday, May 3,

9am-5pm, Saturday, May 4

9am-5pm, Sunday, May 5

## Location

Seminar 2 D2107

## Faculty

Megan Johnston, MA

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available to meet by appointment

## Course Description

Conflict is inevitable and can be productive when handled effectively. There would be no progress in society without disagreements and differing perspectives to fuel positive change. In this 2-credit, intensive class, students will gain a better understanding of conflict and their own tendencies in addressing it. They will develop and practice mediation skills to resolve disputes in a range of community and organizational settings. This class uses an interactive training workshop format.

Enrolled students are expected to participate in an on-line tool, the Thomas-Kilmann Inventory, and bring the report to the first class. The inventory may be purchased and completed at <https://takethetki.com/product/the-thomas-kilmann-instrument-tki/> for \$45. The website will email an individualized report to the student within 24 hours of assessment completion.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Understand core conflict sources
2. Become familiar with personal conflict handling styles
3. Practice active listening
4. Identify the differences between interests and positions
5. Learn the roles of mediators and participants
6. Understand the mediation process
7. Practice paraphrasing and reframing communication skills
8. Learn to use questions in order to encourage thinking and facilitate collaboration
9. Identify and plan uses for mediation skills in your own life and career

## Course Format

Class time is designed around role play activities to develop mediator skills. Activities will enable students to practice the skills essential to help others navigate conflict, including identifying issues, clarifying interests, facilitating brainstorming and decision-making, reality testing, and reframing. This class is best suited to students who have some work, advocacy and/or community service experience from which to draw upon as we practice a broadly applicable conflict management and resolution skillset using both scripted scenarios and experiential examples the students may choose

to share in a confidential manner. There will be a focus on collaborative learning in addition to collaborative processes. Everyone has something to contribute and will be invited to do so.

### Credit

Credit will be earned by those who attend all classroom meetings, fully participate in class activities, complete the assignments and demonstrate substantial increase in mediation related skills over the intensive class weekend. If a student must miss the later part of the class, they may be eligible for partial credit. One must attend the beginning of class to participate and receive any credit since each topic will build upon material already presented earlier in the class.

### Work Products and Performance Criteria:

1. Class participation – participate in class discussions, activities and role plays with focus and integrity
2. Self assessment – complete skill level assessments at beginning and end of class and conflict mode assessment before class with self-awareness and honesty; this approach will increase your own ability to use mediation skills in the future
3. Brief essay on mediation skills applications – demonstrate awareness of the benefits and limitations of these skills in the context of a real cause or project
4. Mediation skills practice and implementation plan – produce an actionable plan to use and build upon the skills you practiced during the class

### Class Expectations

1. Arrive on time and attend all class meetings
2. Contribute to the class by participating in discussions and activities
3. Honor confidentiality for personal experiences and stories shared during the class
4. Complete and present assignment according to guidelines and deadlines provided

### Class Overview

#### Friday

- Opening Circle and Introductions
- Setting Expectations
- Mediation Discussion
- Understanding Conflict
- Conflict Modes
- Core Communication Skill: Active Listening
- Interests vs Positions

#### Saturday

- Mediation in context
- Negotiation Overview
- Stages of Mediation
  - Orientation
  - Understanding Parties and Identifying Issues
  - Problem Solving
  - Agreement Writing
- Stages Practice
- Core communication Skills
  - Paraphrasing
  - Summarizing
  - Reframing

## Sunday

- Core Communication Skills
  - Effective use of Questions
  - Reality testing
- Facilitating decision-making
- Caucusing
- Co-mediating
- Emotions in Disputes and Dispute Resolution
- Using Mediation Skills in a Variety of Contexts
- Implementation Plans
- Feedback
- Closing Circle

## Required Course Materials

- Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Inventory Tool (\$45, <https://takethetki.com/product/the-thomas-kilmann-instrument-tki/>; complete assessment at least 2 days before class and bring report to first class)
- “Mediation Skills and Process” NVMS training manual (available via the copy center in the Bookstore)
- Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In, Roger Fisher & Bill Ury, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> edition preferred, but any version will work; used books are readily available.

## Optional Text (not required)

- Mediation Skills and Techniques, Laurence J. Boule, Michael T. Colatrealla Jr., and Anthony P. Picchioni. 2008.
- Conflict 101: A Manager’s Guide to Resolving Conflict so Everyone Can Get Back to Work, Susan Shearouse, 2001.

## Required Fees

\$45 for Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Inventory – students to purchase and complete online before class; <https://takethetki.com/product/the-thomas-kilmann-instrument-tki/>

**\$18.01 for “Mediation Skills and Process” training manual**, due to bookstore

## To Prepare for Class

1. Complete Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Inventory, read the assessment you will receive, and bring assessment report to class
2. Read “Getting to Yes;” focus on chapters 1-8 before first class.
3. Consider these questions and be prepared to share your answers in class:
  - a. “What are the skills of a mediator?”
  - b. “What role do you see for mediation skills in your work, community and personal life?”

## Primary Assignments (details to be provided on the first day of class for #s 2-4)

1. Complete self-assessment of conflict modes (before 1<sup>st</sup> class, see Thomas-Kilmann Inventory above)
2. Complete self-assessment of mediation-related skills at the beginning and end of the course
3. 1-2 page essay on how the use of mediation skills might be used to support or advance a cause or project of interest to you

4. 1 page mediation skills practice and implementation plan

Inclement Weather

This course will follow the inclement weather decisions of Evergreen State College. In case of inclement weather or other local emergency, check the college status at [www.evergreen.edu](http://www.evergreen.edu) or by calling 360-867-6000. As long as the college is open, class will be held as scheduled.