

**UNIVERSITY OF OREGON**  
**CONFLICT AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION MASTER'S PROGRAM**

**CRES 612: PHILOSOPHY OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

**Spring 2021**

Class Meetings:	Tuesday & Thursday 2:15-3:45
Class Location:	Zoom room access through Canvas
CRN:	31726
Instructor:	Edgar Temam
Office Hours:	By appointment (see Course Policies)
E-mail:	etemam@uoregon.edu

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This class community offers us the opportunity to practice reflecting critically about conflict resolution by examining philosophically some fundamental concepts and principles as well as theoretical frameworks.

It is an opportunity for each of us to reflect on and examine our own views, not to try to persuade others. This is not the proper forum for persuading, at least not primarily or directly, and, furthermore, persuading, at a minimum, might hinder our examination of our own views by giving us the illusion that we already know them and know why we hold them and that, therefore, we no longer need to examine them.

There might be at least as many apparently different views in our class community as there are members and authors. This is good. This plurality and this diversity offer us an opportunity to compare and contrast our views with those of others and thereby to achieve a deeper awareness of where we stand and why we stand there. Moreover, if in order to examine critically one's views and reasoning, one needs the help of others--who ask for clarifications, but also who challenge and object to one's views or reasoning--these others, far from being one's opponents or adversaries, are thus, rather, as *objectors* potentially one's *helpers*.

The kind of critical reflecting we will be practicing might help us to think and act creatively.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

As a result of taking this course, students will be able to practice and thereby develop the habit of critically:

- Examining the theoretical frameworks in play in the field of conflict resolution, which includes analyzing the language and terms in which these frameworks are expressed, reflecting on the underlying concepts at work,

- evaluating the reasoning, and inquiring into these frameworks' unexamined or unstated fundamental assumptions and implications;
- Reflecting on their own views regarding both these frameworks and the worldviews that these rely upon;
  - Reflecting on the need to conceptualize or re-conceptualize appropriate phenomena, to re-define terms or to coin new ones, to revise assumptions and hypotheses and theories or to introduce new ones, and to practice reflectively and creatively as critical members of the field.

## **COURSE TEXTS**

### **Required**

- COURSE READINGS (on Canvas) from Thucydides, Hobbes, Rousseau, & Kant, under their name, as well as from others in "Quotes, Etc."; and online through the UO Libraries or from websites offering free access. (See "Schedule" on Canvas.)

### **Recommended**

- See "Recommended" on Canvas

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Contributions:** Here are some ways for you to make positive contributions:

- Preparing by reading critically our assigned readings as well as annotating questions and comments to be addressed in class discussions;
- Engaging in class discussions, which includes active listening and offering interpretations, insights, and responsible feedback;
- Engaging in class activities, which includes in-class writings;
- Completing assignments as scheduled;
- Cooperating in group-work; and
- Facilitating formally a discussion during part of a class.

**Critical Reflections:** There are two such compositions. You may choose which two to compose out of the eight possible assignments: Critical Reflections I-VIII (see schedule). The form is argumentative, at least a partial one (see prompt).

The content should be relative to the field of conflict resolution, and not abstract philosophical examinations (see prompt).

These assignments and the detailed prompt are on Canvas.

These responses are credited as complete (100%) or incomplete (0%). Completing the assignment means, at least, meeting all the requirements specified in the prompt. Incomplete assignments may be revised and resubmitted as long as the assignment is open.

**Term Paper:** There is one essay for the term. It too is a critical reflection in the argumentative form, just less partial and more comprehensive (see prompt).

The content should be relative to the field of conflict resolution, and not abstract philosophical examinations (see prompt).

I recommend that you discuss with me at least your specific topic and issue as well as your essay's thesis, main line of reasoning, and primary objection.

This assignment and the detailed prompt are on Canvas.

**Discussion Facilitation:** You will be responsible for facilitating a class discussion on an issue of your choice. (The issue may be from your term paper.) This assignment prompt is on Canvas.

### **GRADING**

Contributions	30%
Critical Reflections	20% (2 x 10%)
Term Paper	40%
Discussion Facilitation	10%

**Grading Scale:** A+ = >100, A = 94-100, A- = 90-93, B+ = 87-89, B = 83-86, B- = 80-82, C+ = 77-79, C = 73-76, C- = 70-72, D+ = 67-69, D = 63-66, D- = 60-62, F = 0-59.

I reserve the right to increase anyone's overall grade based on such things as one's improving, significantly contributing to our class community, or showing a greater understanding of the material than one's essays seem to reflect.

I recommend that you work with your classmates on all the readings and assignments—discussing and learning together and helping each other.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE** (subject to change)

See "Schedule" on Canvas.

### **COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance:** Your attentive presence constitutes a significant share of your contributions.

**Participation:** Your participation constitutes another significant share of your contributions.

**Contributions:** Your contributions matter; they play a role in shaping this class. There are many ways for you to make positive contributions: for some instances, see "Course Requirements" above.

**Office-Hours Meetings:** You are welcome to schedule meetings with me; I encourage you to do so. These meetings can be mutually beneficial.

**Email:** Please feel free to email me.