

MASTER'S PROGRAM IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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General Information

The Master of Arts/Sciences Degree Program in Conflict Resolution is a theoretical and applied philosophy, as well as an interdisciplinary, professional program. The program draws from a variety of disciplines in addition to philosophy including psychology, political science, sociology, communication and education. The program's current areas of emphasis are: violence prevention, mediation, negotiation, facilitation, restorative justice, nonviolent social change, international and intercultural conflict resolution, dispute systems design and evaluation.

For admission to graduate study, the student's background and preparation should reflect an ability to pursue graduate work in conflict resolution. It is not required that the applicant have an undergraduate degree in philosophy or any other specific academic discipline. Because the program is broadly interdisciplinary, students with any undergraduate degree are encouraged to apply for admission. Should the student's preparation be deemed inadequate in certain areas, the student will be required to overcome those deficiencies through formal coursework and/or directed readings. All such work is separate from work toward the master's degree.

Each applicant to the conflict resolution graduate program must submit a statement of purpose explaining his or her reasons for pursuing this advanced degree, along with an academic writing sample of at least ten pages in length. Additionally, each applicant must submit three letters of recommendation from individuals closely acquainted with the applicant's academic career and, where applicable, with the applicant's professional background and competencies.

All students are admitted to the program on conditional status. Regular status and retention in the graduate program requires the satisfactory completion of 12 graduate credits with a minimum grade of 3.00 in each course and evidence of satisfactory progress toward the degree.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

MA or MS in Conflict Resolution

University master's degree requirements are listed in the current Portland State University Bulletin. Specific program requirements are listed below.

Students entering this program are expected to develop an understanding and appreciation of the theoretical, conceptual, and methodological breadth of the field and to develop expertise in the pursuit of their own particular interests in the study of conflict resolution.

In conjunction with the student's adviser, each student will design a program based upon particular concerns within the field of conflict resolution, such as violence prevention, mediation, negotiation, facilitation, restorative justice, nonviolent social change, international and intercultural conflict resolution, dispute systems design and evaluation.

This program will provide the student with the appropriate research competencies--critical, qualitative, or quantitative--to pursue independent inquiry under faculty guidance. The master's degree program consists of a minimum of 63 credits of coursework, including 9 credits of thesis work and 9 credits of practicum work. Each student's program must be based upon the following courses or their transfer equivalencies.

Required Core Courses

- CR 512 Perspectives on Conflict Resolution (4 credits)
- CR 513 Philosophy of Conflict Resolution (4 credits)
- CR 518 Psychology of Conflict Resolution (4 credits)
- CR 515 Negotiation and Mediation (4 credits)
- CR 524 Advanced Mediation (4 credits)
- CR 526 Intercultural Conflict (4 credits)
- CR 522 Thesis Preparation Seminar (1 credit)
- At least one 4-credit course in research methods. Several departments offer courses that satisfy this requirement, such as Anth 512, Eng 596, PS 595, Psy 597, Psy 598, Soc 592, Soc 593, Sp 521, Sp 531)

Area of Interest

All graduate students are expected to develop a theoretical competency in at least two areas of emphasis. Areas of emphasis will be designed in consultation with the student's program advisor. Areas of interest currently supported in this program include the following:

- Violence Prevention
- Mediation, Negotiation, and Facilitation
- Restorative Justice
- Nonviolent Social Change
- International Conflict Resolution
- Dispute Systems Design and Evaluation

Other areas of emphasis may be developed, according to particular student needs, in consultation with the program adviser.

Emphasis Area Coursework

Students must take a minimum of four interdisciplinary elective courses. These four courses, combined with the core courses, must support at least two emphasis areas. The program director maintains a current list of recommended interdisciplinary elective courses that support emphasis areas.

Elective Coursework

In addition to core requirements, all students must take a minimum of 16 credit hours in elective courses. These courses can be either within the Conflict Resolution program or from other departments. Ideally, each student will pursue classes that most meet his or her areas of interests and needs. Students should work with their advisors to make sure that electives outside of the program fulfill the necessary and appropriate conditions of the program.

Practicum

The Master's Degree Program in Conflict Resolution has a nine-credit (300 hour) practicum requirement. There are two ways to fulfill this requirement:

1. Complete the entire practicum at one site. This can be done as an intensive (i.e. in the summer) or over an extended period of time.
2. Choose two or three separate sites and determine how to divide your efforts.

Before beginning the practicum, it is recommended that students complete core courses including CR 512, CR 518, CR 515 and CR 524. It is also recommended that students wait until the second year of their master's work before beginning their practicum experience.

Although these recommendations are not requirements, having completed at least a year of academic work including the core courses mentioned give students a strong grounding in the theories and methodologies they are expected to apply to their experiential work.

The practicum is designed to give each student an opportunity to create an experience that fits his or her particular interests, needs and opportunities. Your advisor will work with

you to determine the best placement(s) for your practicum and must approve your placement before you begin.

There is a practicum notebook in the Philosophy office, which has current listings of agencies offering internships. While many practicum sites are already established, you are free to explore new possibilities for practicum. If you discover new sites that are interested in our students, please forward relevant contact information to either Steve Jahnke or Barbara Tint.

The practicum experience has a variety of purposes:

1. Provides students with an opportunity to see a variety of conflict resolution techniques in practice in a variety of settings.
2. Provides students with an opportunity to practice conflict resolution skills beyond the classroom setting.
3. Creates the opportunity to develop a mentorship relationship with a conflict resolution practitioner in the community.
4. Includes the community in educating and training new conflict resolution professionals.
5. Provides community partners with skilled and trained assistance in their organizations. We feel this is a way to contribute to their work in exchange for training and supervision for candidates.
6. Increases the theory/practice dialogue in the classroom and in the community.
7. Continues to build strong relationships with our partners in the community.

Practicum Requirements

1. ***300 hours of work – 9 credits.*** Practicum hours can be broken down to suit your particular needs. 100 hours of work equals three credits. Hours include time spent directly involved with your practicum experience. Please make sure to create a practicum that works for you logistically and realistically given other scheduling commitments.
2. ***Practicum Log*** – You are expected to keep a log of your hours and activities during your practicum. This is to be turned in at the end of each term for which you are signed up for practicum credit.

3. ***On Site Visit*** - As part of your practicum experience, you, your site supervisor and your advisor will have a meeting in each term for which you are signed up for credit. This meeting is intended as an opportunity for you and the partners in your experience (the site and PSU) to sit down together and evaluate how things are going. This helps keep the lines of communication open and ensure that you and the site are getting what you need from the experience.
4. ***Supervisor's Report*** - In order for you to have a successful practicum, you will need someone on site who is willing and able to supervise your time. Please be as clear as possible when setting up your practicum what is expected of you and of them. At the end of each term, your supervisor is expected to write a brief report summarizing and evaluating your activities at the site. This can be brief (1-2 pages) and should be sent directly to your advisor within the program.
5. ***Reflective Paper*** – At the end of each term, you are to write a 5-10 page paper reflecting on your activities in your practicum. Suggestions for the paper include writing about what you have learned, what you found to be challenging, the interplay of theory and practice at work, and how the learning from your coursework did or did not apply in your practicum experience. This paper needs to be handed in to your advisor on the Monday of finals week for each term you are enrolled in practicum.
6. ***Personal Responsibility*** – As in all aspects of your graduate experience, your practicum is your responsibility to develop and maintain in a responsible and professional manner. While your advisor and other faculty can be of assistance in many ways, ultimately, this is your project. If there are things you need to know, ask. If there is something not working, address it. Above all, have an enriching and meaningful experience!

Thesis or Project

Each student will complete a thesis or project and pass a final oral examination on the thesis or project. Students must complete at least 9 credits of CR 503 Thesis or CR 506 Project; 9 credits maximum count toward the degree. The thesis or project advisor and thesis or project committee will be selected, in consultation with the program adviser. Prior to beginning work on the thesis, all students will be required to take the Thesis Preparation Seminar where they demonstrate proficiency in relevant theories and research methodology.

Library Resources

The study of conflict resolution is interdisciplinary, drawing on methods and theories from a variety of humanistic and social science disciplines. It is a good idea early in the program to visit the areas in the library devoted to education, humanities, social science, and business. The Library offers orientations at the beginning of each term.

It's important to become familiar with the journals, reference work, and general layout of each early, and consult them frequently. The following list are periodicals relevant to the field:

PERIODICALS RELEVANT TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

NAME	CALL NO
Dispute Resolution Journal	KF 9085.A15A7
Family and Conciliation Courts Review	KF 531.A3 C6
International Journal of Conflict Resolution	GN 496.I15
International Journal of Conflict Management	HD 42.I57
Journal of Conflict Resolution	JX 1901.J6
Journal of Peace Research	JX 1903.J6
Journal of Social Issues	HN 51 J6
Law and Social Review	HM 34.A1L3
Mediation Quarterly	KF 531.A3 M4
Negotiation Journal	BF 637.N4N414
Peace and Change	JX 1901.P248
The Arbitration Journal	KF 9085.A15A7

Transfer Credit

Students **should not assume** that courses at the graduate level taken prior to formal admission to our Department's program will be included in their degree program.

There is a specific form (GO-11, see Appendix I) that must be completed for the transfer of credit. This form must be filed with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research no later than the end of the term following the term of admission to the program. A maximum of 16 hours of transfer credit may be counted toward the degree, subject to the approval of the student's advisor.

Program Advisor

Core program faculty serve as program advisors for all candidates admitted to the Conflict Resolution Graduate Program. An advisor is assigned to each student and assists the student in deciding on the appropriate courses to take based on program requirements, area of interest and anticipated thesis research. The Program Advisor also assists the student in completing required forms according to prescribed deadlines (See Appendix I)

Students may elect to work with a different advisor if there is another faculty member whose interests and abilities are more suited to their own. Program advisors may or may not serve as the thesis chair for their advisees. A thesis chair is someone chosen specifically by the student to work closely with on matters of thesis research and writing.

Conditional Status

All students are admitted to this graduate degree program on a "conditional" basis. See the current PSU Bulletin (catalogue) for a complete description of this status. Each spring, the Graduate faculty will review the progress of each student who is still on "conditional" status and initiate the change of status (Form GO-7, see Appendix I) for all students who are deemed to be making satisfactory progress. Students will be informed of the faculty's action within two weeks after the review is completed; a student not advanced to "regular" status is expected to meet with the Program Advisor to discuss needed remedial action within one month of notification.

Language Requirement (MA Students only)

An MA degree requires proficiency in a foreign language. Those students seeking an MA degree will arrange with the Foreign Language Department for the language proficiency examination. The university language requirement must be satisfied prior to the final term of work. See the current PSU bulletin.

Principles of the Program

All students are admitted with the understanding that they will conduct themselves in a manner congruent with the principles of the conflict resolution program. If there are conflicts or difficulties that arise between students or between a student and faculty member, students are expected to handle these situations in an appropriate, ethical, respectful and constructive manner. Students who behave in ways that are contrary to the values of the program could jeopardize their status.