Principles Of Environmental Conflict Resolution 76671 - EVPP 682; 74952 - CONF 682

Semester: Fall 2009

Class Time: Mondays, 4:30 – 7:10 pm Location: Truland Building 647 Instructor: Frank Dukes, Ph.D.

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm (Truland 601)

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PRE-REQUISITE: CONF 501 or 502 or permission of the instructor

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course explores the nature and characteristics of environmental conflict and efforts to manage, resolve or transform it. We begin by examining how contemporary environmental conflict manifests itself and is addressed through private and public processes, before turning to the range of deliberative processes encompassed by the term "environmental conflict resolution" or ECR. Four guiding questions will continue throughout the course as we examine environmental choices and conflict: Who benefits? Who loses? Who gets to decide? Who is left out?

While ECR processes are by no means appropriate in all circumstances, this course does propose that public environmental decisions are generally better when developed by processes that are inclusive of diverse views, transparent and inviting to those such decisions affect, and responsive to participant needs. Such processes need to encourage behavior that builds relationships of integrity and trust and decisions that are creative, effective and legitimate. Communities can only be sustained ecologically, socially, and economically with informed, legitimated participation by citizens actively engaged in public life. People yearn for accessible forums and processes to engage one another productively and safely, to speak of their own concerns, needs and aspirations, and even to learn the real needs of their neighbors. Such caring can engender conflict, which may be harmful, but authentic discursive processes provide an opportunity to transform civic disarray into civic responsibility.

Students will develop a capacity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of ECR processes while learning about best practices for preventing, preparing for, and addressing environmental conflict.

Course Conduct: Much of environmental conflict is created or exacerbated by institutional structures and processes that deny needs and voice unnecessarily. Because I do not want your learning experience to be similarly harmed, we will conduct this class as though you are partners in, and at least partly responsible for, not only your own learning but that of your classmates as well. In other words, I'm asking you to consider knowledge a common resource, and like other common resources one that can be abused if selfishness, laziness or more well-meaning but similarly harmful interests interfere.

Honor Code

I expect you to demonstrate respect for the learning process and those who contribute to that process. Knowledge is a shared resource and I encourage sharing ideas with other class members, including reviewing written assignments prior to submission. In order to protect the integrity of knowledge I also expect you to acknowledge the contributions of others, whether those come in the

form of writings or such discussions. Plagiarism or other violations of the honor code are not acceptable in this or any other GMU class. See the ICAR handbook (http://www.gmu.edu/departments/ICAR/newstudent/Appendix_L.pdf) for clarification of related issues, or ask me if you have any questions. It is much better to error on the side of inclusion.

At any time, if you want to discuss a question about the syllabus or about your personal performance, please contact me outside of class via my office or by email. If you have questions about the application of a technique or theory, please raise that question in class for the benefit of everyone.

Readings (books):

- O'Leary, Rosemary and Bingham, Lisa eds., *The Promise and Performance of Environmental Conflict Resolution* (Washington, DC: Resources for the Future, 2003).
- Auerbach, Jerold, Justice Without Law?, (Oxford University Press, 1983).
- Collaboration: A Guide for Environmental Advocates (to be distributed without charge in class).

COURSE OUTLINE:

This course will have three related tracks.

Environmental Conflict Resolution Theory: We will examine the larger forces driving environmental conflict in our society and the development of conflict resolution tools as well as the "collaborative governance" movement. This track includes:

- The Domain of Environmental Conflict
 - * Societal changes
 - * Themes of governance
 - * Sources of conflict
- The Conflict Resolution Response
 - * The range of ECR processes
 - * The growth of institutional capacity
- Consideration of the Response
 - * What has been accomplished?
 - * What should be done?

Skills While this course is not a training, and not intended to prepare students to become environmental mediators, a second track will involve the practice of environmental conflict resolution. This track includes:

- Assessing environmental conflict and collaboration;
- Building shared expectations for effective, principled work;
- Designing effective ECR processes.

Cases The third track is the study of specific environmental disputes and efforts used to address those problems. This track includes:

- Attributes of environmental disputes;
- Assessing such disputes (case analysis).

The primary learning tools will be readings, class lectures and discussions, exercises (e.g., simulations), and interaction with classmates, parties to disputes and negotiations, and other invited guests. Your primary requirements to take advantage of these opportunities are attention, initiative, risk and consistent work.

GENERAL:

- Attendance and participation in class is very important. Please show up on time, but if you are late don't let that stop you from participating once you arrive. And **please let me know in advance if you will miss a class.** Assignments may be modified on a weekly basis, and you will need to make appropriate arrangements.
- Collaboration: A Guide for Environmental Advocates and additional readings will be distributed free to the class.

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:

- * 8 short essays of 700-900 words combining your analysis of reading assignments with your observations of a selected issue or issues in your area of interest. These are due on Sundays at 5 p.m. (40%).
 - * Active class participation (30%).
 - * Group assignment designing a simulation. (30%).

GRADING:

An A is offered for outstanding work; a B is given for work that is truly satisfactory; a C is unacceptable for graduate participants.

Grading will be based on:

40%: Eight 700-900 word essays in blog format based upon course readings, class discussions, and student experiences.

These written assignments will be graded as follows:

- 0 Did not complete assignment, or no apparent effort or thought.
- 6 Completed assignment. Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them. (C)
- 8 Satisfactory effort. Demonstrates good preparation: knows case or reading facts well, has thought through implications of them. Offers interpretations and analysis of case material (more than just facts) to class. (B)
- Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed material and other comments exceptionally well, relating it to one's own experiences and/or other readings or material (e.g., course handouts, discussions, experiences, etc.). (A+)

I do give weight to organization, writing style, and mechanics, as well as demonstrated understanding and presentation of issues.

Note: A point is deducted for a late assignment.

30%: Class attendance and active participation.

Active participation in class discussions, assignments, and exercises is expected from each student.

Beginning with class #3, participation is rated for each class on a scale from 0 (lowest) through 10 (highest), using the criteria below. While your participation is important for any class you take, this class by its experiential nature requires considerable involvement, including interaction with your classmates.

We each learn from what you offer to the class. I encourage you to strive for a "10" for your own and others' benefit.

Participation Grade Basis:

- **0** Absent or without contribution.
- Demonstrates very infrequent involvement. Present, not disruptive. Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much. (D)
- Demonstrates occasional involvement. Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the case or reading), without elaboration or very infrequently (perhaps once a class). Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on. (C)
- Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement. Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion. (B)
- Demonstrates ongoing and very active involvement. Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc. (A+)

NOTE: Missing a single class will not cost any overall grade slip (e.g., from an A- to a B+ or B to B-). Missing two classes likely means dropping at least half a grade, depending upon your other grades.

30%: Group Simulation Design.

In small groups, you will design a simulation with the following requirements:

- 1) Identify your specific objectives for the project (what you want to learn, what impact you want to have);
- 2) Develop a covenant for how you will work with one another in your project group, beginning first individually with the worksheet format handed out in class (start with "at our worst" based on previous class projects; then "at our best" based upon how you want your group to be; then continue keeping your group in mind);
- 3) Identify information and/or other resources that you know you will need to conduct the project;
- 4) Develop criteria by which you will evaluate your success upon completion of the project. These criteria should be based upon 1 and 2 above.

Project essentials for class presentation due Dec. 4:

- 1) An agreement stating how you will work together with one another on this project, including ways in which you will hold one another accountable for that agreement
- 2) A situation assessment that identifies key issues, stakeholders, and processes related to your simulation;
- 3) A set of roles identifying realistic interests and concerns of various stakeholders;
- 4) An evaluation protocol that would assess whether and how those goals and objectives were accomplished.

Course Schedule - Note: this should be understood as a description of the course sequence rather than a fixed calendar, as the actual course content and assignments may vary by student interest, guest schedules, and current events.

Class 1: What is ECR? Course Goals and Outcomes August 31

- Introductions and student goals: Who are we, and what do we want to achieve?
- Course overview.
- Introduction to environmental conflict resolution.
 - What do we mean by environment? What do we mean by conflict? What do we mean by resolution? What other terms are useful?
 - What we are fighting for: community perspectives, economic perspectives, public interest perspectives, governing perspectives?
- Four guiding questions: Who benefits? Who loses? Who gets to decide? Who is left out?
- Introductions and student goals: Who are we, and what do we want to achieve? Hand out syllabus, Guide.

Do warm-up – arrange seating in class.

You thought you were getting an expert in conflict resolution and mediation. You are mistaken: student, still learning; anticipate learning from you. Do have collective benefit of 25 years of IEN activity, almost 18 years of my own at IEN, dissertation research which included observation of various forums and interviews w/ a couple of dozen practitioners; community med. experience; Alb. High School med. program; various levels of community activism.

I need your commitment. We are going to learn how to bring people together to address challenging issues, when many forces are working to pull people apart. This is a difficult task; it will take a lot of your time, energy, and hard thinking. Many answers that you would like to have are not apparent; there is no good textbook, and much of this cannot come from a text anyways – we need to experience what it is like to work together on a challenging task, to learn from our failures and our successes, to aspire to more than we might reasonably expect to accomplish.

I am not going to spoon feed you knowledge – you are going to work very hard to accomplish what I think that you are capable of and what you will want to get out of the class.

You might consider that this is what we are asking people to do when we seek to bring people together to work on environmental issues: it is controversial, risky, time-consuming, messy, difficult; we don't really know for sure that it will work; we are dealing in an arena in which mistakes can have long-term personal and public effects and long-lasting consequences.

Lesson: We had better be as prepared as we can be; we had better have a clear idea about why we do this, what the value of collaboration and conflict resolution is, and the moral and ethical considerations of intervention in others' lives. The good news is that this can be the most rewarding of all work – to help

people who are facing nearly impossible tasks, who may be in conflict, who are sometimes fearful, who may believe themselves too powerful – to engage one another, to learn, to offer a valued voice, and to solve what they though were intractable problems with compassion and grace, with creativity, and with responsibility.

NOTE: most important concern not a meeting process, per se, but understanding of community dynamics, capacity for assessment, design, convening, implementation, followup: my goal is to help you develop a practical conceptual framework for intervention by sharing perspectives which we have gleaned from experience and research and from assessment of the conflict resolution and collaboration field.

Your experience and interests are each different: use this course to develop a framework that you can develop, supplement, challenge.

Expectations: Active participation; ask questions when unsure; can break off role plays or exercises at any time if too much discomfort.

- Introduce selves: Who, which area you are most interested in working, main interests in course, specific objectives (perhaps write first, or do in groups of 3).
- Course overview: point out course flow (key themes); then, describe how we will do it: Aspirations/course outcomes, cases, speakers, exercises.
- Introduction to environmental conflict resolution.
 - O What do we mean by environment? What do we mean by conflict? What do we mean by resolution? What other terms are useful?
 - What we are fighting for: community perspectives, economic perspectives, public interest perspectives, governing perspectives?
 - o Four guiding questions: Who benefits? Who loses? Who gets to decide? Who is left out?

Assignments for Class 2 (Sept. 14):

• Complete Student Information Sheet.

Read:

- O'Leary/Bingham, G. Bingham "Foreword" and Chapter One, Emerson, Nabatchi, O'Leary & Stephens, "The Challenges of ECR".
- Dukes, "Integration in Environmental Conflict."
- Dukes & Firehock, "Collaboration: A Guide for Environmental Advocates," 1-8.
- Essay One (700-900 words): Challenges of ECR

Class 2: Understanding ECR, and How We Will Work Sept. 14

- How will we organize and conduct ourselves to accomplish our goals as individuals and as a class? By what indicators will we measure our success? [N.B.: If you can think of a better way to measure individual achievement that enhances your learning and does not unduly increase my workload, I am open to that.]
- The landscape of environmental conflict: media/topic (air, water, waste, land use, health, recreation, resource use, protected areas, energy, climate, marine, coastal, urban), level (neighborhood, community, region, bio-region, local/state/federal/regional/international, watershed), arena (private, judicial, administrative, legislative, media).
- The range of ECR processes.
- **Introduce** self and 3 ways that you relate to your community, with at least one of those ways referring to a geographical community (as opposed to a community of interest)

• How will we organize and conduct ourselves to accomplish our goals as individuals and as a class? By what indicators will we measure our success? [N.B.: If you can think of a better way to measure individual achievement that enhances your learning and does not unduly increase my workload, I am open to that.]

Do "Covenant HG" exercise with drawing paper and markers.

• The landscape of environmental conflict: media/topic (air, water, waste, land use, health, recreation, resource use, protected areas, energy, climate, marine, coastal, urban), level (neighborhood, community, region, bio-region, local/state/federal/regional/international, watershed), arena (private, judicial, administrative, legislative, media).

Do "drop of water" game. Ask people to get into groups by location (could be location of origin), and trace the path of a drop of water as it makes its way through the Atlantic Ocean. Bring flip charts to draw on.

• The range of ECR processes.

Do powerpoint from MACRO training.

Reading Notes:

Bingham Intro: Bingham intro: Self-awareness of assumptions is critical for mediators; "neutrality means more than not taking sides on the issues themselves." (p. xi); we need to give parties a clearer framework to analyze their choices and what might be achieved; assessing success is a big challeng in public policy.

Outcome claims fall under relationship, process, and substance. We need more analysis and rigorous research.

Emerson et al. chapter:

This chapter is a primer for ECR. "Upstream" (planning and policy), "midstream" (permitting is the only example), and "downstream" (compliance and enforcement). They then describe scope as policy (upstream) vs. site-specific (downstream). Also they use formal (judicial) -vs. informal (interest-based) continuum (p. 9).

5 characteristics of ECR: usually voluntary participation; parties or representatives participate directly; parties free to withdraw [isn't that what voluntary means?]; third-party netural without authority to impose outcome; parties consent to outcome.

Problems w/ legislative process: getting all parties heard - costs/human resources a challenge; adminstrative arena encourages flare-ups of conflict, due to resource challenges.

Problems w/litigation: insufficient p. participation for important decisions, due to cost and time; doesn't address actual issues and hence leaves conflict unresolved.

Advantages: less risk, lower costs, efficient outcomes, stable agreement. Procedural justice increases.

Most use: site specific cases.

"Facilitation is a collaborative process in which a neutral party assists a group of stakeholders in constructivelyh discussing the issues in controversy." (11) "Mediation is a form of facilitated

negotiationin which a skilled, impartial third party with neither decisionmaking authority nor the power to impose a settlement assists the parties in reaching a voluntary, mutually agreeable resolution to all or some of the disputed issues." (11)

Methodology issues [good]: single, small-n descriptive case studies dominate; practitioner-scholar bias relative to "more detached, objective investigation" (16); diversity and uniqueness of applications "makes cross-case comparisons and controlling for particular variables difficult." (16); inaccessible data due to confidentiality and record-keeping; retrospective reporting subject to recall bias. But the potential for longitudinal analysis is better with more disputes, ability to look back at implementation and compliance patterns, transferrence to other forums or into other issues, changes in relationships over time.

conceptual issues: "mediation is good" ideology; comparison to litigation, problematical because of match-up and non-litigation use; disputes as discrete phenomena rather than part of a more dynamic conflict process or expression of a larger pattern of social conflict. or recognizing conflicts occur in "waves", limited use of research from other fields; focus on settlement; and models of social conflict (pluralistic bargaining; utilitarian decision theory; jurisprudential models; deep political conflict; republican deliberation (21).

Assignments for Class 3 (Sept. 21):

Read:

• Auerbach, Justice Without Law.

Class 3: The Context: Whose Responsibility Is This? Sept. 21

- The structure of environmental conflict. The American experience with informalism.
- Case study: Montgomery County Infill Mediation guest, Richard Alper, J.D. *Assignments for Class 4 (Sept. 28):*

Read:

- Money Point Revitalization Plan; Money Point situation assessment.
- Innes, J. E. and Booher, D. A. "Reframing Public Participation: Strategies for the 21st Century."

Class 4: Case Study in ECR: Assessment and Consensus Building for Money Point Sept. 28

- A new goal for public participation?
- Conducting a situation assessment.
- Revitalizing Money Point case study.

Assignments for Class 5 (Oct. 5):

Read:

• O'Leary/Bingham, Ch. 2: Birkhoff & Lowry, "Whose Reality Counts?"; Ch. 14: Brodgen, "The Assessment of Environmental Outcomes."; Ch. 15, Colby, "Economic Characteristics of Successful Outcomes"; and Ch. 4, Coglianese, "Is Satisfaction Success?"

Class 5: Goals of ECR: "If you don't know where you want to go, how do you know if you got there?"

Oct. 5

- Beginning with the end in mind.
- Evaluation and assessment.

Assignments for Class 6 (Oct. 13 - Tuesday):

Read:

- McCloskey, J. Michael. "The Skeptic: Collaboration Has its Limits." High Country News. 28 (9), p. 13. 1996.
- Innes, J. "Consensus building: clarification for the critics."
- Dukes, "Guide", 9-21.

Class 6: Who Needs ECR? Criticism and Responses Oct. 13 (NOTE: Tuesday, not Monday)

- Things fall apart: what goes wrong during ECR.
- Why ECR advocates are (often) wrong.
- Why the critics are (mostly) wrong.

Assignments for Class 7 (Oct. 19):

Read:

- O'Leary/Bingham, Ch. 3, Beierle & Cayford, "Dispute Resolution as a Method of Public Participation."
- Bellman, "A Guide to Case-Specific Process Selection."
- Dukes, "Guide," 22-42.

Class 7: Comparing Processes: Fitting the Forum to the Fuss Oct. 19

- Best practices.
- Cases of ECR: local, state and national examples. Guest: Kate Kopischke, World Bank's International Finance Corporation, Office of the Ombudsman.

Assignments for Class 8 (Oct. 26):

Read:

- "Towards an Environmental Justice Collaborative Model: An Evaluation of the Use of Partnerships to Address Environmental Justice Issues in Communities."
- "Towards an Environmental Justice Collaborative Model: Case Studies of Six Partnerships Used to Address Environmental Justice Issues in Communities."

Class 8: Environmental Justice: A Collaborative Approach? Oct. 26

- Two Americas.
- Using ECR to address environmental injustice.

Assignments for Class 9 (Nov. 2):

Read:

- O'Leary/Bingham, Ch. 8, Leach & Sabatier, "Facilitators, Coordinators, and Outcomes."
- Dukes, Glavovic and Lynott, "Training and Educating Environmental Mediators: Lessons From Experience in the United States."

Class 9: The Third Party: Welcome Guest or Skunk at the Wedding? Nov. 2

• What do mediators or facilitators do?

Assignments for Class 10 (Nov. 19):

- Read: O'Leary/Bingham, Ch. 6, d'Estrée, "Achievement of Relationship Change".
- Dukes, "Public Conflict Resolution: A Transformative Approach."

Class 10: Is Environmental Conflict Transformation Possible? And Does It Matter If It Is? Nov. 9

- The transformative ideal.
- Global warming, climate change and radical environmental transformation: is ECR irrelevant?
- U.S. Climate Action Partnership (USCAP): Guest Tim Mealey, Meridian Institute Assignments for Class 11 (Nov. 16):

Read:

• O'Leary/Bingham, Ch. 11: Berry, Stiftel & Dedekorkut, "State Agency Administrative Mediation," and Ch. 12, Kloppenberg, "Court-Annexed Environmental Mediation."

Class 11: Capacity Building for ECR: Part One, State Offices and Universities' Role in Collaborative Governance

Nov. 16

- State offices promoting environmental conflict resolution.
- Universities the University Network for Collaborative Governance (UNCG) *Assignments for Class 12 (Nov. 23):*

Read:

• O'Leary/Bingham, Ch. 9: Rowe, "Evaluation of EDR Programs"; Ch. 10, Emerson & Carlson, "An Evaluation System for State and Federal Conflict Resolution Programs;" and Ch. 13, O'Leary & Raines, "Dispute Resolution at the U.S. EPA."

Class 12: Capacity Building for ECR: Part Two, Government Agency Capacity Nov. 23

• Examples: CADR, EPA. *Assignments for Class 13 (Nov. 30):*

Read:

 Addor, Cobb, Dukes, Ellerbrock & Smutko, "Linking Theory to Practice: A Theory of Change Model of the Natural Resources Leadership Institute."

Class 13: Capacity Building for ECR: Part Three, Leadership Nov. 30

• Building collaborative capacity within and across sectors. *Assignments for Class 14 (Dec. 7):*

Read:

- O'Leary/Bingham, Ch. 16: Bingham, Fairman, Fiorino, and O'Leary, "Fulfilling the Promise of Environmental Conflict Resolution."
- Dukes, "What We Know about Environmental Conflict Resolution: An Analysis Based Upon Research."
- Emerson, O'Leary & Bingham, "Commentary: Comment on Frank Dukes's "What We Know About Environmental Conflict Resolution."

Class 14: What Now?

Dec. 7

• The future of ECR: current trajectory vs. desired path.

Instructor Biography:

As Director of the Institute for Environmental Negotiation (IEN) at the University of Virginia, Dr. Dukes designs dispute resolution and public participation processes, mediates and facilitates, teaches and trains in the areas of public involvement, mediation, negotiation, and consensus building, and conducts research. He has worked at local, state, and federal levels on projects involving environment and land use, community development, education, health, and racial and ethnic diversity. He also has helped initiate and is core faculty of the Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute, a year-long program that brings together representatives from industry, non-governmental organizations, public agencies, and communities to develop collaborative leadership around environmental issues.

As part of IEN's "Collaborative Stewardship Initiative," he initiated the "Community-Based Collaboratives Research Consortium" seeking to assess and understand local collaborative efforts involving natural resources and community development, and the "Best Practices Guidance Project" resulting in the publication of *Collaboration: A Guide for Environmental Advocates* in partnership with The Wilderness Society and the Audubon Society in July of 2001.

His book Resolving Public Conflict: Transforming Community and Governance (Manchester University Press and St. Martin's Press, 1996) describes how public conflict resolution procedures can assist in vitalizing democracy, by engaging citizens productively in civic and community affairs, by aiding public entities in developing a responsive governance, and by enhancing society's capacity to solve difficult public problems. With two colleagues he is co-author of Reaching for Higher Ground in Conflict Resolution (Jossey-Bass, 2000), which describes how diverse groups and communities can create expectations for addressing conflict with integrity, vision, and creativity.

He received a B.A. from the University of Virginia and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University. He was previously operator of a piano restoration business for over 10 years in Albemarle County. He is a founding member and past chair of the Community Mediation Center of Charlottesville-Albemarle. He also serves as advisor to and trainer for University Mediation Services. He is co-chair of the Environmental/Public Policy Section of the international Association for Conflict Resolution. He has two children. His wife, Linda Hankins Dukes, teaches reading to elementary school students.

Bibliography of Readings:

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- Innes, Judith E., and David E. Booher. "Reframing Public Participation: Strategies for the 21st Century." *Planning Theory & Practice* 5, no. 4 (2004): 419-36.
- McCloskey, J. Michael. "The Skeptic: Collaboration Has Its Limits." *High Country News* 28, no. 9 (1996): 7.
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