School for New Learning
DePaul University
Course Syllabus: Introduction to Restorative Peacemaking Practices
Course No.: FA389
Term: Spring 2017

General Information

Instructor:
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Dates/Times:
Wednesdays
5:45pm-9:00pm
March 29, 2017 – June 7, 2017

Location:
Loop Campus

Credit Hours:
4

Course Description:

The course will provide an introduction to the emerging field of restorative justice and its application in the criminal justice system, schools, workplaces, communities, families and organizational settings. Restorative approaches are based on aboriginal and indigenous traditions that create a new framework to build community, resolve conflict, problem solving, decision make, develop consensus, reconcile, celebrate, heal and transform. It is a growing movement that explores how relationships can be restored, built or deepened by recognizing the capacity of the individuals and community to identify and resolve their issues in a manner that meets their needs, addresses their responsibilities, recognizes their abilities, reflects their values and allows them to move forward. We will examine various approaches to implementing restorative principles as well as the challenges of creating and sustaining restorative environments, initiatives and resources to support communities in developing safer, healthier and sustainable relationships. The underlying dynamics that are usually at the root of conflict isolation and alienation will also be considered to better understand and appreciate the possibilities and promise of restorative processes.

Competencies:

A-4 Can analyze a problem using two different ethical systems.
1. Identifies and describes an ethical issue or problem.
2. Describes the distinctive assumptions of two different ethical systems.
3. Analyzes the problem by comparing and contrasting how these two different systems would apply to that particular ethical issue or problem.

Students demonstrate this competence by applying two ethical systems to a particular issue or problem that permits substantial ethical examination (for example, business practices, uses of technology, reproductive rights, class structures, institutional racism, sexual behavior, etc.). Students may choose any ethical system that is associated with particular thinkers. Students may consider the
choices these thinkers identify, and the standards or measures by which these choices are made to obtain desired outcomes.

H-3-D Can employ the skills of negotiation, mediation, or interpersonal communication in the resolution of a problem.
1. Identifies the components of a specific interpersonal relationship and describes the problem that exists within that relationship.
2. Applies principals of mediation, negotiation, or interpersonal communication to resolve the problem.
3. Evaluates the effectiveness of the intervention and of the theoretical model underlying it.

Students demonstrate this competency by applying principles of negotiation, mediation or interpersonal communication to an actual situation. Students need to articulate their reasons for employing a given approach and to evaluate the effectiveness of that approach.

L-3 Can assess the social and personal value of civic engagement for achieving change.
1. Critically analyzes national and local civic issues from a systematic perspective.
2. Explains the impact an engaged citizen can make to improve the effectiveness of a society.
3. Articulates a strategy for personal engagement.
4. Engages in an activity that positively contributes to the civic life of a community.

Students demonstrate this competency by actively engaging with other community members in addressing an issue facing the community. The issue itself is analyzed to show an understanding of social and economic trends that shape the community. Given these systematic trends, the role of the individual in action with others is articulated with specific strategies for future involvement. Students develop and practice related skills by directly engaging in an activity that is of benefit to the civic life of a community.

L-7 Can learn collaboratively and examine the skills, knowledge, and values that contribute to such learning.
1. Participates in a learning project with others.
2. Applies collaborative learning skills, such as communication skills, skills of group dynamics, etc.
3. Reflects on one’s ability to contribute to the collaborative learning process as characterized in at least one model or theory.

Students demonstrated this competency by working with others to develop common understandings around a shared agenda that leads to an assessable outcome. Collaborative learning is characterized by a willingness to explore the ideas and insights of others in atmosphere of mutual respect, encouragement, and challenge. Essential to this competence is understanding the distinctions among collaboration, cooperation and strategies of group dynamics.

FX Understands how restorative processes make space for dialogue and exploration of how participants in an incident, conflict, dispute, situation or in relationship may come together to discuss what happened, how it happened, how it impacted all involved, and to determine how they all may move forward in a peaceful, respectful, safe and, hopefully, meaningful manner.

Learning Objectives:

• Discover the philosophical and historical underpinnings of the restorative movement.
• Attain critical understanding of the prevailing processes and philosophy of restorative practices with an emphasis on the awareness of the experience and needs of participants engaged and impacted by the process.

• Understand the principles of the restorative philosophy and how the different processes encompass and apply the principles in different settings and under different circumstances.

• Understand the significance of values to restorative philosophy and how those values help determine the appropriate process and approach for a specific community based on its challenges, needs, responsibilities, capacity, resources and aspirations.

• Explore emerging “restorative” efforts within and outside of the criminal justice system including but not limited to juvenile justice, schools, communities, families and workplaces and the growth of such efforts into contexts involving military, domestic violence, child welfare and institutional infrastructures.

• Articulate the differences in practices and approaches based on reading assignments, video clips, visiting speakers, possible “field trips”, in class discussions and exercises.

• Experience a restorative process in class dialogue as well as in possible “field trips” with the intention to enhance the students’ connection, communication, listening and critical thinking skills.

• Examine how restorative processes can support social justice, collective responsibility, community development, conflict resolution, building or rebuilding of relationships and strengthened resiliency.

• Ability to compare and contrast restorative justice with retributive or punitive justice approaches.

• Apply restorative techniques to enhance the student’s communication and listening skills and to enrich the student’s personal and professional relationships.

Learning Experience:

Learning Strategies:

• Class will be held in a restorative circle setting to enrich collaborative learning and sharing through dialogue on weekly readings, guest speakers, field trip experiences and final project preparation as well as topics introduced for purposes of discussion, exploration and examination.

• Guest speakers will visit the class to share their stories, challenges and aspirations related to their experiences with restorative processes as practitioners or participants which shall be received with courtesy and respect. Given the circle format, the students can actively engage through questions and direct interaction with the speaker. Lively exchange is always encouraged.

• On a weekly basis, the students will contemplate, reflect and write about their experience, beliefs and thinking related to a topic or question pertaining to the reading, speaker story, class discussion or current event linked to the course subject.

• Throughout the course, students will participate in small group, triad or pair exercises designed to address competency criteria and focused on a topic introduced by a speaker, reading assignment or class dialogue.
• The final project provides an opportunity for students to choose a method to hone and further concentrate on their competency. The attached final project memo provides a few options from which the students may choose as well as tailor and adapt with the instructor’s assistance and guidance. For competencies A4, H3D and L3, the syllabus provides specific direction. For each competency, the student must complete a final project.

• **Resources:**

Required reading includes the following books in their entirety:

- MacRae, Allan and Zehr, Howard. *The Little Book of Family Group Conferences, New Zealand Style* (Good Books, Intercourse, PA 2004).

Throughout the course, additional materials such as articles and excerpts from below may be distributed to compliment or support a guest speaker, discussion topics or a current event that is related to the course content.


Ross, Rupert. *Indigenous Healing Exploring Traditional Paths* (Penguin Group, Ontario, Canada 2014)


Wimberger, Lisa. *New Beliefs, New Brain* (Divine Arts, CA 2012)

A list of recommended readings is attached hereto.

As the course requires regular writing submissions, the Writing Center is a valuable resource that could help and assist students with the weekly written assignments as well as the final project abstract and reports.

**Learning Deliverables:**

• An assignment calendar describing weekly journal and writing assignments, guidelines and due dates is attached hereto. The intention of the assignments is to build upon the students’ life experience while integrating concepts from the reading or discussions in class.

• All students will submit a weekly journal assignment (minimum of one page) which will reflect their thoughts and responses to a question.

• All students will submit a weekly writing assignment based on required readings or an article/website link provided in class or posted on D2L.
• In lieu of a final exam, all students will work on and submit a final project to illustrate their understanding of the restorative movement, application of restorative principles or practices in a particular setting and the impact and its potential on relationships, dynamics, institutions and systems in micro and macro ways. The final project option will be tailored and adapted to better meet the student’s competency with the guidance and assistance of the instructor. For competencies A4, HD3 and L3, final project descriptions are below. For competencies L7 and FX, students will refer to the final project memorandum to select an option that fulfills their competency requirements.

• Final Project:

All students will submit a written final project abstract no later than class #5 describing their final project option (L7 and FX - chosen from a memorandum to be distributed and reviewed in class) or of their own design to address their specific competencies (A-4, H-3-D and L-3). The purpose of the abstract is to identify the focus of the final project, how the student will prepare for it and what the student plans to demonstrate and undertake so that the instructor may assist the student’s efforts. The abstract shall consist of a couple paragraphs providing a snapshot of the student’s ideas, questions and roadmap.

Restorative principles serve as the container for difficult or challenging conversations conceptually as well as in practice. A restorative approach applied to conflict, disruption, crime or imbalance in all sorts of circumstances or environments offers the opportunity to restore or rebuild relationships, possibly heal or transform communities or cultures. Through such efforts, we ultimately change the way we view ourselves and how we relate to and interact with others.

From the onset of the course, the class will embark upon discussions that explore ethical issues within the various systems in which we live, work, learn, practice our faith, seek meaning, purpose and justice, as well as systems we occasionally encounter. These discussions will focus on motivators such as, but not limited, to values, morality, belief systems, character, social mores, sense of duty or obligation, institutionalism as well as the forces that monitor, regulate, empower, challenge, undermine and enforce conformity, compliance, individuality, independence, integrity and justice.

Through weekly reflections, visiting speakers and in-class dialogue, students will consider how restorative principles and practices are being utilized in the context of the criminal justice, education, military, domestic violence, mental health and child welfare systems encompassing a potential myriad of ethical concerns and challenges and contemplate different ethical theories’ pertinence.

• A-4 students may fulfill their final project requirement by examining an ethical issue through the lens of two different ethical theories. With the instructor’s assistance, the student will research the issue and investigate the chosen setting or backdrop, possibly through interviews with stakeholders, case studies or other published materials or reports to gain a solid understanding of the problem and its context. Upon application of two distinct ethical theories, for example, deontology or utilitarianism, to the problem, the student will analyze and assess how each theory or theorist’s methodology emphasizes different points or elements in order to reach an ethically sound and desirable outcome. In consultation with the instructor, the student will share their learning in a final project that will describe the problem, the two theories employed, analysis of application of each theory and evaluation of the conclusion. The student may opt to convey their analysis and examination process through:
  1) written paper (no less than 8 pages);
  2) in-class presentation
  3) creative or artistic expression
The latter two options shall be accompanied by a reflection paper (minimum of 2 pages) describing the student’s challenges, insights and experience in bringing their final project to life.
Students shall discuss their final project ideas and plans including their selected ethical issue, theories and approach with the instructor prior to submitting the abstract so that the instructor may help shape and structure the student’s approach.

As conflict and change are natural, inherent and inevitable in relationships and often the focus or intention of a restorative practice, effective ways of addressing, resolving and learning from challenging relationships make up an underlying current of the course.

Through in-class exercises, weekly reflections and the changing dynamics of a class, students will consider, discuss and experiment with skills, styles and techniques of mediation, negotiation and interpersonal communication while enhancing critical thinking, listening and communication skills. Adapting approaches or models along a continuum of different situations, circumstances and relationships helps to resolve issues and to avoid or prevent future misunderstandings and communication breakdowns while supporting empowerment, self-determination and accountability.

• H-3-D students will fulfill this competency through developing a plan to identify, describe and address a problem that exists within an interpersonal relationship with the principles of mediation, negotiation or interpersonal communication as their final project. Students will consider a relationship, its history and current circumstances, the impact of the problem on the relationship and assess an approach that will help to resolve the problem in an effective and sustainable manner. With the guidance and support of the instructor, the student will prepare for the process, engage the party(ies), and implement the principles chosen to address the problem and attempt to resolve the matter. Upon completion, the student will share how they came to determine the principles applied, the effectiveness of the approach, if the issue or problem was addressed to the satisfaction of the parties, the parties’ experience within the process, and their expectations and intentions in moving forward. Additionally, the student will share their thoughts and insights on how the principles used are distinct or similar to restorative principles, how the interpersonal relationship may have been changed by the experience and the potential impact on the parties. The student will submit a final report including the initial plan, the actual process and its outcomes.

• L-3 students may fulfill their final project requirement by identifying a civic issue and engaging within a community (organization, agency, institution, foundation or group) committed to addressing the issue. The student is encouraged to choose an issue, context and community where they have an opportunity to participate in a positive and meaningful manner. If the student is interested in juvenile delinquency, incarceration of minors, school to prison pipeline, at risk mental health services, poverty, racial or ethnic disparities within the juvenile justice systems, the student may choose to participate in a drumming circle at the Juvenile Detention Center, visit the Manuel Saura Center, a community based residential center as an alternative to detention located in Chicago, a RJ Hub, a community led approach to youth crime and conflict providing safe space for youth, family and community to build healthy relationship, competencies and resilience, Curt’s Café, a non-profit organization that provides training in food service and life skills based on restorative philosophy for at-risk youth in Evanston or a sweat lodge, if the timing is right. Whatever issue interests or appeals to the student, upon researching possible communities and opportunities, the student will discuss such options with the instructor prior to submitting the final project abstract. The instructor will assist and support the student’s efforts in setting up and making arrangements for engagement with a local entity. After taking part in such activity, the student will submit a written report (no less than 3 pages) describing the issue, strategy, activity, participation, skill development, benefit and impact of their experience.

Final project option and abstract memorandums are attached hereto. Both memorandums and due dates will be reviewed and discussed in class.

• All assignments will be submitted on the D2L drop box by the designated due date (prior to class).
Assessment for Student Learning:

• Students’ weekly written reflections will be evaluated for comprehension of concepts presented in reading, analysis of primary themes and assimilation of the student’s views, perspectives and experiences within the content or context provided.

• Students’ participation in and contributions to class dialogue are expected. The class is conducted in circle format which supports oral communication, fosters collaborative learning and invites storytelling by integrating and building upon student’s life experience. Circle also invites and encourages query, challenge and examination that help students assimilate the information to better understand application, implementation and outcome possibilities.

• Students’ final project abstract will be assessed for clarity and development of the final project idea and the student’s implementation plan. The final project report will be assessed within the context of the criteria provided for the particular competency option for content, structure, analysis, research (if appropriate) grammar and mechanics.

• Grades will be based on an accumulation of points that will be converted to a letter grade or Pass at the end of the quarter. Students will receive points for class participation, weekly assignment submissions, final project abstract, presentation (if applicable) and reports.

• Points will be deducted for missed deadlines, unexcused absences and failure to participate.

• If a student experiences difficulty in submitting assignments in a timely manner, the student shall contact the instructor to discuss how they can responsibly proceed to fulfill the course requirements.

• Upon choosing the Pass/Fail option, irrevocable once made, the student must notified the instructor within the first two weeks of the course.

Point System:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Assignments</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project Abstract</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project Report/Presentation/Artistic Expression</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Grading System:

A: 92-100
A-: 90-91
B: 82-89
B-: 80-81
C: 72-79
C-: 70-71
D: 62-79
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation (30 points)</td>
<td>Attendance (communicate with instructor regarding excused absences).</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engagement &amp; Listening (sharing story, offering ideas, asking questions, thoughtful listening)</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Preparation (read, contemplated and completed assignment)</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Writing Assignments (30 points)</td>
<td>Comprehension of concepts</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Analysis of primary themes</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Assimilation of student views, perspective &amp; experience</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project Abstract (10 points)</td>
<td>Clear description of final project idea or option</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Plan” to bring idea to life - preparation, steps, resources, anticipated challenges, desired outcomes, questions, guidance and support needed</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project Presentation &amp; Report (30 points)</td>
<td>Presentation / Artistic Expression / Engagement:</td>
<td>Total 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tailored to option and competency – participation, creation, design, demonstration, delivery, interaction with community, agency or class, and conveyance of themes, ideas or discoveries</td>
<td>(tailor to individual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Report:</td>
<td>student final project plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tailored to option and competency - students’ findings (e.g. plan, process, strategy, outcomes) challenges, insights, impact and experience in bringing project to life in context of content, structure, analysis, (research, if appropriate), and grammar</td>
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An extra credit option may be presented toward the end of the course.

For an Incomplete (IN) grade to be granted, the student must contact the instructor regarding this request and then initiate and file the SNL Incomplete grade contract prior to the final class. The student is responsible for providing a copy of the contract to the instructor for her files.

**Course Policies:**

**Attendance and Participation:**

- Given the course approach and classroom format, student participation is essential to ensuring understanding and appreciation for the subject matter and related issues. Each class experience builds on the prior class to enhance and support the students’ learning and processing of the curriculum.

- The course is designed to create a flow and momentum for sharing, exploration and discovery.

- At the earliest possible time, students shall notify the instructor of missing class so that the instructor and student may determine how the student can “catch up”.

- Unexcused absences and failure to participate will be reflected in the student’s final grade.
• The instructor is committed to supporting students’ education, integration of the course material and students’ life experiences as well as efforts in furthering restorative learning so that she is available by email, telephone and appointment, to the best of her ability.

This course includes and adheres to the college and university policies described in the links below:
- Academic Integrity Policy (UGRAD)
- Academic Integrity Policy (GRAD)
- Incomplete Policy
- Course Withdrawal Timelines and Grade/Fee Consequences
- Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability
- Protection of Human Research Participants
- APA citation format (GRAD)

Course Resources:
- University Center for Writing-based Learning
- SNL Writing Guide
- Dean of Students Office

Faculty Bio:

As a restorative practitioner, facilitator, and trainer, Elizabeth assists families, communities and organizations in improving communication and strengthening relationships in an effort to move forward. Since 2001, Elizabeth has been a member of teams responsible for the development and implementation of restorative programs that support youth and families throughout Cook County. Elizabeth has been active in the conflict resolution community through her service and participation on many boards and as facilitator at national and international conferences. Her speaking engagements have taken her to the United Kingdom, Australia, Hungary, Canada and throughout the United States. She has written and contributed to articles focusing on restorative circles supporting families with problem solving, decision making and extrication from the court system. Elizabeth has instructed a family law course at DePaul School for New Learning as well as co-instructed juvenile justice and restorative practices courses at DePaul College of Law. Elizabeth received her JD from the Dickinson School of Law of the Pennsylvania State University, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and her BA with honors from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.