Whether one is concerned with public and non-profit management, public policy, finance, or urban planning and land use, the professional working in the various realms of the public/non-profit sector is either going to have to manage, or function effectively in, a wide variety of conflicts.

Conflict is ubiquitous – within and between organizations and agencies, between levels of government, between interest groups and government, between interest groups, between citizens and agencies, etc. The increasing complexity and interrelatedness of public issues, the increasing sophistication and capacity of organizations that advocate for both public and private interests, and the availability of social media and the Internet to spread information and mobilize public opinion all compound the challenges for those who seek to ground public policy in data, evidence and thoughtful analysis. In this environment, it is essential for public, non-profit and private sector managers and agents to know how to manage conflict effectively. (Functioning in an international or intercultural environment, whether for the U.N., an international NGO or a multinational company, or even in an organization whose workforce is multicultural, adds yet another layer of complexity, but that is a subject for another course, PADM-GP.4105).

In the absence of confidence and skill in conflict management, public officials and private actors tend to resort, often counterproductively, to the use of power, manipulation and secretiveness in order to try exercise control over potentially volatile situations. At the heart of conflict management is competence in negotiating. By possessing confidence and skill in negotiating, one can engage with others more directly and constructively. Through readings, lectures and discussions and, most importantly, through simulations and their debriefings, you will develop an understanding of conflict dynamics, the art and science of negotiation, and the potential role of neutral "third parties". The course will emphasize both the theoretical and the practical. You are encouraged to keep a journal, as you will almost certainly learn a lot about yourself, and self-awareness is central to the development of these skills.

Evaluation:
1. Class participation (10%). This is for contributions made to class sessions, not just attendance. Given the hands-on experiential nature of this course, attendance at classes and participation in outside-of-class negotiation exercises between classes are mandatory.
2. Performance in “Sally Swansong” roleplay (10%). Your grade will reflect how well you advance the interests of the party you represent in the negotiation and how well you demonstrate negotiation competence by applying the best practices discussed in the course. See below for more detail.
3. Reflective essay (80%). In the final essay, you will discuss what you learned from preparing for and from participating in the final negotiation exercise. The final negotiation exercise is a team negotiation that will take place following the final class, at a time and location to be chosen by both teams. The final paper is to be a maximum of five pages in Word (not a PDF file), double-spaced, indented paragraphs (so that no extra lines are needed between paragraphs), 10-point Times New Roman or similar font, using 1” margins. Due via e-mail on Monday, February 10, or by mutual agreement. Evaluation of the paper will be primarily based on your ability to demonstrate that you have studied the course readings and reflected on the class discussions and see their relevance to what you did and what you observed during the final negotiation exercise. Therefore cite course readings and class discussions, putting footnotes in parentheses in the text (author and page number, and title if there is more than one by that author in the readings). Though content is paramount, grammar, punctuation, spelling, clarity and professional presentation all matter, and papers that are poorly written or full or mistakes will not be eligible for a grade in the A-/A range – and may even be returned to be redone, with an automatic grade reduction. You are accountable for the basic rules of grammar contained in the Grammar Sheet posted on the course site, but you should consult Strunk and White’s classic The Elements of Style or other guide or go to the Writing Center (212-998-8866, writingcenter@nyu.edu) if your writing needs improvement.
4. Fun (0%). You are sincerely invited to have fun in this course. It is not a requirement, however, and how much fun you have will not affect your grade in the course.
Readings:
Available at the Professional Bookstore
Malhotra, D. & M. Bazerman, Negotiation Genius; NY, NY: Bantam Dell, 2008 (paperback)
Stone, Patton & Heen, Difficult Conversations; NY, NY: Viking Press, 2010 (paperback)

Articles posted on the course site.

Session 1 - Monday, January 6: (5:30-9:00pm)
Conflict Management and Conflict Dynamics
Strategies for Managing Organizational Conflict
Principles of Negotiation – part one

Readings:
Deikman, The Observing Self, pp. 92-95; Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1982


Hofstadter, excerpts from “Metamagical Themas: Computer tournaments of the Prisoner’s Dilemma suggest how cooperation evolves,” Scientific American, May, 1983


Malhotra and Bazerman, Negotiation Genius, Introduction, Chapter 14 (pp. 296 to top half of 300); New York, NY: Bantam Dell, 2007
Session 2 - Monday, January 13: (5:30-9:00pm)
Principles of Negotiation – part two
Competing Theories of Negotiation

Assignments for session 2:
1. Do Development Negotiation in the Project Review Process negotiation outside class (see Blackboard for basic roles and additional material for 1 or 2 optional follow-up meetings).

2. Fill out the Negotiation Style Survey and Scoresheet and bring to class.

3. Fill out the Doodles for the Maxwell House, Sally Swansong and final negotiation exercises.

Readings:
- Malhotra and Bazerman, op. cit., Chapters 1 – 11.
Session 3 - Friday, January 17: (9:00am – 12:00pm)
Communication in Conflict Management
Principles of Negotiation – part three

Assignments for session 3:
1. Do Maxwell House negotiation outside class. (See the materials on the course site for the initial roles and for the optional additional material that allow you to imagine adjourning the initial negotiation meeting and having one or even two “follow-up meetings”).

2. Be prepared to play the role of Audrey Simmons at the meeting in her office when the community representatives demand the cancellation of the awards ceremony in “Audrey Simmons and the FAA”.

3. Be prepared to speak about the relevance of the course experiences and readings for your life (any aspect). What are the conflict management and negotiation strategies you think you typically use in life? What are you learning about yourself in relation to conflict and negotiation?

Readings:


Schindler & Lapid, excerpts, The Great Turning; Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Co., 1989

Session 4 - Friday, January 24: (9:00am – 12:00pm)
Principles of Negotiation – part four

Assignment for session 4:
1. Do the Sally Swansong negotiation outside of class (allow 30-45 minutes and bring a calculator with you, just in case you need it). Each pair of negotiators will write up and legibly sign an agreement, assuming they reach one, to be handed in at session 5. It will be graded on the basis of both how well you did for your client, compared to how others in the class did for that same client, and how well you demonstrated negotiation best practices. If you think that my understanding of your individual performance won’t be clear from the agreement itself, you may (but are in no way obligated to) write me an individual memo explaining why the negotiation ended up as it did.

2. Be prepared to discuss the explicit and implicit debates in the first five readings assigned for this session, most particularly those concerning the nature and role of power in negotiation and the implications for making strategic choices. You may be called on to summarize the authors’ respective views, and you will need to have thought about these readings, not just read them.

Readings:
Final assignment and paper:
The final negotiation exercise, to be conducted outside of class, will be a team negotiation. You will be a member of a two- or three-person team and will negotiate with another team. You will need to set aside time to meet as a team to prepare for the negotiation and then to negotiate for two hours, or more if necessary.

Upon the completion of the negotiation, the two teams will together prepare a written statement that (a) either spells out the terms of the agreement or states that no agreement was reached and (b) lists the names of all the negotiators, by teams. The statement will be submitted electronically, and we will then disseminate a compilation of the statements to all the teams after everyone has done the exercise.

Your final paper will be a personal reflective essay on what you learned from preparing for and participating in the final negotiation exercise, including any insights gained from seeing the results submitted by the other negotiating groups. (Please see page 1 of this syllabus for more detail about formatting and due date.) You are encouraged to use the exercise to the fullest as a learning experience by finding time to ask your teammate – and even your counterparts – for feedback about what you did well and what you could improve upon.

The paper will be evaluated primarily on (a) the quality of your insights and (b) your ability to demonstrate that you have studied the course readings and reflected on the class discussions and see their relevance to what you did (or should have done) and what you observed during the preparation for and conduct of the final negotiation exercise (this can include observations that what happened contradicted or raised questions about the usefulness of the guidance contained in the readings and discussion). Therefore cite course readings and class discussions, putting footnotes in parentheses in the text (author and page number, and title if there is more than one by that author in the readings). Though content is paramount, grammar, punctuation, spelling, clarity and professional presentation all matter, and papers that are poorly written or full of mistakes will not be eligible for a grade in the A-to-A range – and may even be returned to be redone, with an automatic grade reduction.