

COURSE SYLLABUS

Mediation Skills

e-Learning | 24 September – 22 October 2018



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Disclaimer and Acknowledgements

Please carefully read the Disclaimer and Acknowledgements documents located on this course's home page before beginning the course for more information about the terms and conditions of use of UNITAR's virtual learning environment and acknowledgement of those organizations for their authorization to use audio transcripts, webcasts and photographic imagery.

Course Presentation

The United Nations plays a major role in the management and resolution of international conflicts. It is a unique actor in the field of international conflict management which successfully negotiates and implements many of the settlements that have ended some of the most protracted conflicts in the world. Mediation for Preventive Diplomacy is deployed in the context of international conflicts and intra-state conflicts to advance peacemaking. Mediation requires individuals who have the necessary experience, professionalism and judgment to effectively resolve disputes. By improving one's mediation skills and developing the understanding of the UN's role in the mediation process, the course participants will be better equipped to prevent and manage international disputes.

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) has developed this e-Learning course to enable participants to enhance their knowledge, strategies and skills in mediation for preventive diplomacy.

Course Outline

Module 1: Introduction to mediation in international diplomacy and the role of mediator

(24 – 30 September 2018)

- Lesson 1: Introduction - the spectrum of conflict handling mechanisms
- Lesson 2: Mediation as a form of third party intervention in international diplomacy
- Lesson 3: The role of the mediator in preparing, strategizing and prioritizing effective interventions

Estimated learning time: 6 hours

Module 2: Pre-mediation, gaining entry and the early stages of mediation

(1 – 7 October 2018)

- Lesson 1: Pre-mediation and identifying the parties, issues, interests and secondary parties
- Lesson 2: Gaining entry into a mediation process - Acceptability and Impartiality of the mediator
- Lesson 3: Early stages of mediation - Locating a suitable venue, joint conflict analysis and preparation of opening statements
- Lesson 4: The role of culture in mediation

Estimated learning time: 6 hours

Module 3: The role of proximity talks, re-framing, active listening and communication in generating interest-based options to craft an agreement

(8 – 14 October 2018)

- Lesson 1: The mediators use of proximity talks and caucus meetings
- Lesson 2: Mediator's role in active listening and re-framing issues to facilitate effective communication between the parties
- Lesson 3: Designing a problem-solving process and generating interest-based options
- Lesson 4: Later stages of mediation - strategies for overcoming an impasse, the Single Text Procedure and the role of moral guarantors in the implementation of an agreement

Estimated learning time: 6 hours

Module 4: A Case study of a mediation process: a simulation exercise

(15 – 21 October 2018)

Estimated learning time: 6 hours

Contents and Learning Objectives

This e-Learning course aims to improve the practical skills of the participants in international mediation and in understanding the role of the UN in preventive diplomacy. The course will offer insights into the mediation process. The course will also assess the process of gaining entry into a mediation initiative and examine the early and later stages of mediation. In particular, it will touch upon the importance of re-framing, active listening and communication when trying to generate options and crafting an agreement that is acceptable to all the parties.

Module	Content	Learning objectives At the end of the module, you will be able to:
Module 1 Introduction to mediation in international diplomacy and the role of mediator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction-conflict handling mechanisms • Mediation in international diplomacy • Preventive diplomacy • The role of the mediator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and describe different conflict resolution processes and relate them to mediation • Identify how mediation is deployed in the context of international diplomacy • Define preventive diplomacy • Describe the role of a mediator in conducting an intervention process • Recognize situations in which you have mediated before
Module 2 Pre-mediation, gaining entry and the early stages of mediation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-mediation and identification of the parties, issues and interests • Entry into a mediation process • Early stages of mediation • Cultures' role in mediation processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for mediation process • Undertake your own conflict analysis as a mediator • Identify the procedure for initiating a mediation process • Initiate a mediation process and being aware of the physical set-up as well as the procedures necessary to launch a mediation process • Outline the importance of culture in mediation processes and analyze your own and the parties culture might affect a mediation process
Module 3 The role of proximity talks, re-framing, active listening and communication in generating interest-based options to craft an agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key concepts of negotiation • The nature and actors of negotiation • Successive phases of negotiation: the opening, action, and conclusion of negotiations • Negotiation processes of conferences: informal, formal, group and elaborate textual negotiation • Negotiation strategies, tactics and techniques • The mediators use of proximity talks and caucus meetings • Mediator's role in active listening and re-framing issues to facilitate effective communication between the parties • Designing a problem-solving process and generating interest-based options from interests • Strategies employed in later stages of mediation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what to do when a mediation situation gets difficult and how to regularly use proximity talks with the parties separately to move the process forward • Apply active listening to effectively understand what the parties are trying to communicate and advance a mediation process by overcoming an impasse • Use the re-framing technique to phrase communication between parties in a way that reduces, rather than increases, tension between them • Use the Single Text Procedure to draft a unified agreement between the parties • Call upon moral guarantors to assist with the implementation of a mediation agreement

<p>Module 4</p> <p>A Case study of a mediation process: a simulation exercise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mediation simulation exercise with specific outlined steps by the moderator. • Lessons learned in earlier parts of the course will be deployed during this exercise to enable an effective experience of learning by doing and applying knowledge gained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the challenges of mediating through practical experience • Develop and refine mediation skills through active participation in the process • Prepare, initiate and advance a mediation process
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Methodology

The course will be delivered via the e-Learning platform Moodle (please see the course *User's Guide* for instructions on using this platform). This pedagogical tool will help the student meet the course's learning objectives through a self-paced study routine supported by multimedia, optional and required readings, discussion forums, assessment quizzes, and a wealth of other information. Adapted specifically to full-time professionals, students will learn by: absorbing (reading), doing (activities), interacting (socializing), and reflecting (relating to personal experience).

Materials will be posted online on a weekly basis (see Complete Course Schedule under Study Planning section for more details). Your course is divided into four modules.

The three first modules will contain the following structural elements:

- Content
- Exercises
- Learning Objectives
- Lesson Material (text, video, documents and glossary terms)
- Assessment
- Discussion Board also to be used for the simulation exercise

Module 4 will be a simulation exercise and will contain no additional reading material.

Grading Policy and Course Completion

Students are eligible for a course certificate upon successful course completion. Successful completion requires:

- **an 80% passing grade on EACH of the three weekly assessments on Module 1, Module 2 and 3** (8 out of 10 questions correct); you may take each assessment up to 3 times (questions are randomized from a larger pool of questions and therefore will change upon assessment attempts);
- participation in the 4 Discussion Board forums; your posts will be evaluated according to both **quantity and quality** (e.g., content relevance and contribution to overall discussion).

Of particular importance is the **Discussion Board in the last week**, where you will be asked to **simulate a mediation process** by following a number of steps outlined by the moderator which will also provide for interactions amongst the participants.

Before moving to the next module, you should: (a) read all the core module texts, (b) take the module-based assessments, and (c) participate in the weekly Discussion Board forums. You are encouraged to consult the optional external links to enhance your knowledge of the given lesson's topic (e.g., links to websites and additional documents).

All assessments, once made available, will remain accessible until the end of the course and you can be taken anytime during the duration of the course, however assessments should be taken before moving to the next module.

UNITAR's e-Learning Committee will make the final decision regarding certificates in consultation with the moderator. UNITAR reserves the right to award certificates only to those considered as "eligible" participants. We urge you to take a clear note of the above requirements. If you need any clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the Multilateral Diplomacy Programme Team.

Study Planning

The following study grid indicates which course activities are mandatory.

Activity	Mandatory
Interactive Course	Yes
External Links and Readings	No, recommended
Cybrary ¹	No
Module Assessments	Yes
Discussion Forums	Yes
Course Evaluation	Yes

What is distinct about this learning experience is that it is an **online** learning experience. Online training, by its very nature, entails delivery of educational content over the internet. As you will proceed in this course, training materials will be made available to you through UNITAR's e-Learning portal. This course will also provide links to other web resources such as references and documents. Additionally, it will require you to use simple collaborative tools such as email exchanges among the group/participants who have registered for this course as well as participate in a discussion forum.

The UNITAR team is available to provide guidance and user information to help you participate and **contribute actively** to the discussion forums, which are an important requirement for

¹ The Cybrary contains important course information; please see the next section on the course's Learning Content.

completing this course. You will also have access to a course moderator (or instructor) who will animate the discussion board as well as answer substantive and course related questions (either using the Discussion Board or through a traditional e-mail method). There will thus be no face-to-face interaction. All interaction will take place through the internet using UNITAR's e-Learning portal!

The **advantages** of online training are many. You are able to:

- schedule and pace your learning according to your specific needs;
- make use of additional resources using the internet;
- work from office or home as long as you have a computer with an internet connection;
- connect with your fellow participants and instructors through the learning portal.

The lack of face-to-face interaction will require more discipline and pro-active planning on your end in order to successfully meet the course's learning objectives. In this regard, it is thus different and distinct from a traditional face-to-face training course.

The following **Complete Course Schedule** indicates when materials will be posted online and taken offline. Note that following the fourth week, material will remain available online for the wrap-up session in which participants can take the Course Evaluation, as well as finish all assessments until the specified date.

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
24 September 2018	First Day of Course Module 1 online	Discussion Board (DB) 1 Online Assessment 1 Online			Module 2 online
1 October 2018		DB 2 Online Assessment 2 Online			Module 3 online
8 October 2018		DB 3 Online Assessment 3 Online		Start Exercise 2.1	
15 October 2018					Deadline Upload Exercise 2.1
22 October 2018		Webinar with moderator 3PM Geneva time			
	Discussion Board closed Assessments Closed	Assessment Answers Online			

Although this online course is asynchronous – meaning that the interaction between you and the trainers or fellow participants will take place intermittently with a time delay – it will be important to establish a course study routine that best adapts to your work schedule, family commitments, Internet connection speed, etc. This will allow you to complete your

assignments and tasks in time (on a week-by-week basis) and thus maintain a similar pace as other course participants. *Please note that the MDP e-Learning Team will send a reminder if your module-based assessments have not been completed.*

Learning Content²

The complete set of course materials **will NOT be available all at once on the UNITAR portal. Materials will be posted on a weekly basis.** Learning materials are organized as follows:

1. Interactive Course

The interactive course is the core mandatory learning activity. The various module lessons contain links to external documents and websites, videos, questions and suggested responses, and basic text. The lessons are relevant to a wide demographic of participants, both those with basic knowledge on the topic as well as those with more advanced knowledge who wish to focus on the more specialized points of the course.

2. Cybrary

The Cybrary (Cyber Library) is the Resources section of this course. It contains both optional and mandatory materials to enhance your understanding of a given lesson's subject matter. It contains many additional resources, including:

- Printable PDF version of each module (with the Documents to Download cited in each module)
- Optional Readings
- Assessment Answers (posted at the end of the course)
- Transcripts of Videos
- Endnotes with links to many interesting Websites and Articles

3. Key to Icons

² See Disclaimer for more information regarding the terms and conditions of use of the course material.

**Quote or Example**

This icon is used to draw your attention to quotes related to the course material, or language commonly used by those working in the protocol community. Such expressions are inserted in the module text to provide you with third-party examples to more dynamically illustrate course material, and/or to share of what one might typically say in a given context.

**Warning: mistakes to avoid, particular point of interest, etc.**

This icon is used to draw your attention to warnings, hazards or errors that are made by delegates and presiding officers. This icon is also used to signify exceptions to the general rule. While conferences share many commonalities, they also vary, so that there are exceptions to our generalizations.

**Video clip or webcast**

A link to a video applicable to the module.

**Question / Interactive Exercise**

This icon is used to draw your attention to a question or interactive exercise that the trainers have inserted for you to check your understanding as you read through the text. Questions do NOT form part of the end of the module assessment, but we encourage you to take a few minutes and respond to each of the questions. You may also wish to discuss your answers or compare them with the course's other participants or trainers on the discussion board forum.



Document to download / Website link This icon is used to draw your attention to documents available to download, as well as internet links to websites related to the course material.

Course Moderator



Dr. Tim Murithi

E-mail: tmurithi12@gmail.com

Office Location: Cape Town, South Africa

Office hours: I read and respond to my email and to the Discussion Board regularly throughout the week.

Dr. Tim Murithi is Extraordinary Professor of African Studies at the Centre for African Studies in the University of the Free State, South Africa. He is also Head of the Justice and Reconciliation in Africa Programme at the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, in Cape Town, and a Senior Associate, Centre for Mediation, University of Pretoria. In addition, he is Research Fellow with the African Gender Institute, University of Cape Town, South Africa. From 2009 to 2010, he was Head of the Peace and Security Council Report Programme, Institute for Security Studies, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Between 2008 and 2009 he was a Senior Research Fellow, Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford, in the United Kingdom; from 2005 to 2007 he was a Senior Researcher, Centre for Conflict Resolution, University of Cape Town, South Africa; and from 1999 to 2005 he was a Programme Officer, Programme in Peacemaking and Preventive Diplomacy, United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), in Geneva, Switzerland. From 1995 to 1998 he taught at the Department for International Relations, Keele University, England, where he also obtained his PhD in International Relations.

Technical Support

For any technical issue or coordination matter, you may contact the Multilateral Diplomacy Programme e-Learning Team (MDP e-Learning Team) by sending a message through the UNITAR Virtual Learning Environment, by email at mdp-elearning@unitar.org, or by phone. Online support hours are GMT 8 am to 5 pm and emails will be answered within 24 hours.

MDP e-Learning Team

E-mail: mdp-elearning@unitar.org

Phone: +41 22 917 8716

Office location: Geneva, Switzerland

Phone support hours: 8am to 5pm UTC/GMT

Palais des Nations
1211 Geneve 10
Switzerland
T +41 22 917 8400
F +41 22 917 8047
www.unitar.org