

Graduate Program Coordinator

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Introduction

Welcome! A premise of this program is that understanding conflict and gaining skills in conflict prevention, resolution, and transformation are relevant to all professions and are needed in all walks of life. The program faculty have training in philosophy, psychology, communication, education, peace studies, and international relations. They also have expertise in a number of applied fields, such as intercultural management, improvisation techniques, and program evaluation. In this program, students gain an understanding of various kinds of conflict (interpersonal, social, and global) and develop depth in a focus area in the curriculum, such as dispute resolution, human rights, nonviolence, peacebuilding, and global affairs.

The graduate program offers three credentials: a Graduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution, a Graduate Certificate in Applied Conflict Resolution, and a Master's degree (MA or MS). The MA requires a second language competency, which is the only distinction compared to the MS.

Students entering this program will develop an understanding and appreciation of the theoretical, conceptual, and methodological breadth of the field of conflict resolution. Graduates of this program become grounded in theory and practice by exploring philosophical issues as well as the practical application of conflict resolution in diverse contexts. Students in the Applied Certificate or Master's program can, in consultation with their advisor, actively shape their course of study through choice of electives forming a concentration, in their practicum and, at the Master's level, through choice of project or thesis topics.

This Handbook gives an overview of program requirements and policies, and offers some practical advice about how to succeed in the program. It is updated annually to align with the Graduate School's rules and regulations.

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Applying

The application process is fully online and integrates both the application for admission to the Graduate School of Portland State University and the Conflict Resolution graduate program via the [Application Management System](#). The AMS requires the electronic submission of all components of the Conflict Resolution graduate study application. The components of the application include:

a **personal statement** (prompt provided in the AMS)

a current **curriculum vitae** (c.v.)

two writing samples (one academic paper is required, no format specified. Career-oriented applicants may submit a professional writing sample in lieu of an academic sample)

academic transcripts from all institutions where post-high school credit was awarded. Note: official transcripts are not required during the application process but are necessary by the time of matriculation.

language proficiency scores

three letters of recommendation, two of which must be academic/professional. The system will automatically contact your recommenders via email and they submit online.

Applicants are encouraged to consult the [Graduate School website](#) to learn about PSU policies and procedures regarding requirements, tuition and fees, and other special requirements (like language) for international students. If your first language is not English or if your primary and secondary education were completed in another language, the Graduate School requires proof of English language proficiency.

Applications in Conflict Resolution will be reviewed during the **application window of October 1, 2021 to May 10, 2022**. Students should begin their program of study in the fall term, as part of their admission to a cohort and in order to insure proper sequencing of courses.

PSU permits completion of up to 8 graduate credits before matriculation to the Graduate School. However, Conflict Resolution strongly encourages all students to formally apply as early as possible to the program in order to receive appropriate support for the efficient completion of their degree.

All graduate credentials in Conflict Resolution are financial aid eligible. Applicants are welcome to apply for scholarships or other forms of financial support. For more information, see the [Student Finance portal at PSU](#).

The PSU Graduate School provides a very useful [checklist for admitted students](#) to ensure a smooth matriculation process.

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Advising

It is important that all graduate students have an academic advisor throughout their program of study. All full-time faculty in the Conflict Resolution program are eligible to serve as academic advisors except for the faculty member serving as the Undergraduate Program Coordinator. Incoming students will be matched (based on mutual interests) with faculty advisors in the first two weeks of the start of fall term. Students will also have agency in the choice of their advisor. Both the student and advisor should review this assignment during the first term or two, as it is possible that a student's interest or focus will shift and be better served by an alternate advisor.

Students should meet with their advisor at least once per term to discuss ongoing progress in their academic journey with the program. Details about course selection, plans for practicum or research, and other pertinent details should be consistently noted by the faculty advisor. In

addition, the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) monitors student progress, and serves as an additional resource for students. Students may change advisors with the agreement of the new advisor, and the Graduate Program Coordinator. That change must be communicated in writing (email is sufficient) to the GPC and the new advisor must send a confirmation acknowledging this change. The GPC keeps a Progress File on each student.

Faculty who are on sabbatical or who take family, medical, or other official leave may choose to excuse themselves from advising duties during the time of their leave, though they may also choose to continue working with individual students. If the faculty member opts not to serve as advisor, the student has the option of changing advisors or working with a temporary advisor until the return of the regular advisor. These adjustments shall be made in writing (email is sufficient) and recorded in the student Progress File by the GPC.

Retired (emeritus) faculty ordinarily do not serve as academic advisors. However, faculty who have already begun supervising a thesis (CR 503) or a project (CR 506) may, upon approval of the Graduate School, choose to continue as academic advisor. Neither the faculty's choice nor Graduate School approval can be assumed in advance and such arrangements must be documented in writing and noted in the student Progress File by the GPC.

In case of any ambiguity or uncertainty about advising or the selection of an advisor, the Graduate Program Coordinator should be consulted and, on a limited basis, can offer advice until a regular academic advisor can be identified.

A new student orientation will be provided each fall term to acquaint all students in the admitted cohort with the faculty, to review policies and procedures, and to answer questions.

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Program Outcomes & Requirements

Graduate Learning Outcome One: *Advanced Knowledge*

Students will demonstrate the capacity to articulate and integrate theoretical and applied knowledge in varied conflict and peacemaking contexts.

Graduate Learning Outcome Two: *Methods*

Students will demonstrate the ethical capacity to use critical, evaluative, collaborative, and engaged thinking in qualitative and/or quantitative analysis.

Graduate Learning Outcome Three: *Research*

Students will develop the capacity to conduct ethical and effective inquiry on multiple dimensions of peace building, conflict prevention, resolution, and transformation, producing frontier knowledge relevant to the field.

Graduate Learning Outcome Four: *Skills*

Students will develop and use a variety of strategies appropriate to diverse audiences to foster greater understanding of conflict resolution practices and principles. Students will apply skills in active listening, empathetic engagement, dialogue and constructive problem-solving. Students will demonstrate successful academic and professional writing in various formats including reflective writing, presentations, research papers, case studies, and literature reviews.

Graduate Learning Outcome Five: *Professionalism*

Students will engage with the structure of their discipline and their intended career placement as professionals, including the legal and ethical dimensions of these professions and the responsibilities involved to a variety of stakeholders.

Requirements for the three available graduate credentials in Conflict Resolution are outlined below with more detailed expectations, policies, and guidelines provided in separate sections that follow. In addition to the 54-credit MA or MS, Conflict Resolution offers two certificates, a Graduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution and Graduate Certified in Applied Conflict Resolution.

The Certificates can be pursued as stand-alone credentials, and each has a separate application process. The requirements for the Certificates also stack into the full MA/MS, so that a student who is pursuing the master's can also receive the Certificates as distinct credentials along the way, simply by filing the GO-19 form with the Graduate School and paying the fee.

Course #	Course Title	# Credits
512	Foundations of Conflict Resolution	4
513	Values & Ethics in Conflict Resolution	4
518	Psychology of Peace & Conflict	4
508	Workshop: Conflict Resolution Skills	4
526	Advanced Intercultural Conflict Resolution	4
	GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION	20
*530	*Research & Professional Development Colloquium (optional)	1 (p/np)
511	Research Methods in Conflict Resolution	4

5xx	Elective	4
5xx	Elective	4
5xx	Elective	4
509	Practicum	6
	GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN APPLIED CONFLICT RESOLUTION	22
522	Thesis & Project Preparation Seminar	4
503/506	Thesis or Project	4
503/506	Thesis or Project	4
	MA/MS	54

***1) CR 530 is optional for all students not on financial aid and 2) CR 530 is practically "required" for students on financial aid so as to be in compliance and receive aid.**

Coursework

The graduate program is designed to support student learning during the three-term academic year (fall, winter, spring). Students are expected to take the required courses in the sequence intended as illustrated in the program overview above. Elective courses can involve more flexible scheduling and sequencing. The one-credit Colloquium (CR 530) is offered every term of the regular academic year and is a repeatable course. Course registration takes place through the PSU registration hub ("banweb") and follows the [academic calendar](#).

Conflict Resolution is not designed as a self-paced or distance-learning graduate program. While graduate study can be pursued on a part-time basis, admitted students are expected to be continuously enrolled in fall, winter, and spring terms unless on formal academic leave. Financial Aid defines part-time as enrollment in 5-8 credits per term. Students are free to read, investigate, or otherwise explore dimensions of their field of study while not taking classes. However, credit toward a degree can only be earned while registered and paying tuition. Similarly, faculty can not give graded or credit-bearing assignments outside of a discreet course of study, (i.e., a class or by-arrangement).

Concentration

Students pursuing the Certificate in Applied Conflict Resolution or the full master's degree should select 12 elective credits in an interest area or around a theme. Areas of concentration

currently supported in this program include violence prevention, facilitation, restorative justice, nonviolent social change, international conflict resolution, dispute systems design and evaluation. Other areas of concentration may be developed in consultation with a student's academic advisor. Up to 8 elective credits can come from outside Conflict Resolution; such credits should be selected in consultation with the student's advisor. See the Reference section of this handbook for examples of concentrations in electives.

Practicum

One of the many ways in which Portland State University's graduate program in Conflict Resolution prepares students for success as conflict resolution practitioners is by requiring real-world experiences through Practicum. The Practicum experience combines a mix of community-based and in-class learning experiences, which varies according to the expertise of faculty of record and community partner involvement. Through the required 6 graduate credits of Practicum, students have the opportunity to work with and learn from professionals already active in the field of conflict resolution.

The CR Practicum is an experience-based learning component designed to help students gain hands-on practical training that advances their understanding of the linkages between theory, research and practice in the broad field of conflict resolution. The Practicum provides an opportunity to integrate and apply knowledge gained in conflict resolution courses. The Practicum supports CR Program Learning Outcomes that center research, advanced knowledge, skills, and professionalism. It facilitates focused and supportive learning for all students through a combination of regular course offerings and community opportunities during the calendar year.

Who should take practicum?

Students pursuing the Certificate in Applied Conflict Resolution or the full master's degree must complete 6 credits of CR 509 (practicum). Offerings of 509 practicum in Conflict Resolution will provide 6 credits of collaborative, inward and outward-facing applied learning for graduate students. The practicum is offered along a cohort model, consistently situated in a discreet section of the student's overall path, and supervised by faculty teaching. Practicum experiences are designed to support students seeking an applied learning experience via a certificate as well as those interested in a gateway experience to a thesis or final project.

Format and role of faculty

A faculty member/ instructor will oversee the practicum. Students will meet with the instructor at least once, usually at the beginning of each practicum session to go over details, map out plans, and develop individualized pathways for each student. At this meeting students will be taken through the importance and role of practicums in their degree pursuit, policies, expectations and outcomes. Another learning session will be held towards the end of students' practicum experience. All throughout the process the faculty will remain engaged with students to address issues as they emerge. Practicum materials will be routed through the faculty.

Goals

The three main goals of the practicum component are to (a) help students increase their ability to measure and analyze evidence-based conflict resolution practice and techniques, (b) ensure that students work with partners in a competent and professional manner that advances their skills sets, and (c) help students develop their ability to network and gain valuable experience that enhances their job prospects and overall employability with organizations and institutions in the community.

Tracks

There are two main types of practicum from which students can choose: field-based practicum and customized non-field based practicum.

Field-based practicum: This requires placement with an organization or institution within the community where the student/s gain field experience in the practice of conflict resolution. For this track students are expected to spend a minimum of 150 hours and a maximum of 180 hours in the field structured with faculty assistance and supervision to ensure optimal professional development to suit the student's professional goals.

Customized non-field-based practicum on the other hand does not require a formal affiliation with any institution. Instead students may opt to design their own practicum project (with the approval of a faculty member) in a way and manner that is conducive to their learning styles and that meets the aims and objectives of the practicum component of their degree program. In that sense this track could be accomplished individually or in small groups.

Criteria

Regardless of the practicum track chosen by a student, the following criteria must be met:

- Students are doing the same amount of work (observation, implementation and documentation) within the same allotted timeframe.
- Students are receiving the same level of supervision from a designated faculty member/ onsite supervisor (in the case of field placements).
- Students are utilizing conflict resolution skills they've learned including direct observation, reflective practice, active listening etc.
- The community partner could be based anywhere in the world as long as their work aligns with the interest of the student.

Practicum FAQs

Who should do the practicum?

All students pursuing the Certificate in Applied Conflict Resolution or the full master's degree.

Can I find my own community partner?

Yes, most certainly. But please make sure you get the go ahead from the Graduate Program Coordinator first before you enter into any agreement with any prospective partner.

What if I can't find a suitable community partner?

Please let the graduate program coordinator know so he can provide you with a list of other options and discuss next steps.

Does the CR Program have a list of community partners that I could choose from?

Yes, and the list is constantly updated. Discuss with the GPC or your program advisor

How many hours do I have to spend in the field?

Approximately 15 hours per week for a total minimum of 150 and a maximum of 180 hours.

When does the practicum start and end?

It begins the first week of fall term and ends on the final week of spring term. With the permission of the Graduate Program Coordinator students can undertake their practicums over the summer months

Do workshops and training offered by the community partner count towards the fieldwork hours?

Yes, if it is relevant to the student's learning goals. Please discuss with the graduate program coordinator.

May I be paid?

Yes. If your community partner wants to offer a stipend. But please discuss this with the Graduate Program Coordinator.

I don't want to do field placement, is there another option?

Yes the customized non-field-based practicum is the other option (see policy document above)

Can I join with another student to undertake a practicum?

Yes, but the final report should be individually generated

What if I miss a day or the office of the community partner is closed?

Please discuss with your field supervisor to reschedule makeup hours to meet the required 150-180 hours

What if the community partner I am interested in working with is based elsewhere?

The community partner could be based anywhere in the world as long as their work aligns with the interest of the student and that of the conflict resolution program.

If I have other questions, whom should I contact?

Your faculty advisor or the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Thesis or Project

Prior to registering for thesis or project credit, students are required to take the Thesis and Project Preparation Seminar (CR 522). The seminar provides an opportunity to fully explore options for advanced work, to become familiar with the processes and procedures involved, and to formulate a thesis or project proposal (including a literature review). Once approved by the student's advisor, the proposal should be filed with the Graduate Program Coordinator. It is possible to begin exploring a thesis or project prior to enrolling in the required course CR 522. Ideas and inspiration for thesis or project can come from just about any course in the required or elective courses.

Master's degree students must complete at least 8 credits of CR 506 (project) or CR 503 (thesis). These credits are generally pursued "by-arrangement" rather than in a classroom setting. By arrangement credit is student initiated in the banweb [Student Registration Hub](#) on the PSU website.

Important to know about creating a By-Arrangement:

Students and instructors should have a conversation about the by-arrangement credit prior to initiating a request. You will need the following information to complete the request:

- Instructor Name (if student is initiating request)
- Student's PSU ID (if instructor is initiating request)
- Subject Code (e.g. ACTG, FILM, PSY, etc.)
- Course number (199,405, 503, 601, etc.)
- Number of credits
- Grade Mode (P/NP, A-F, etc)
- Course Title
- Course Description

Any thesis or project involving research in the study of human participants must have approval of the Human Subjects Research Review Committee. Form can be found on the Research and Strategic Partnerships (RSP) website. <https://sites.google.com/a/pdx.edu/research/integrity/hrpp>

Eight (8) credits of 506 or 503 are required for the master's degree but the distribution of these credits per term is determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the student's academic advisor, based upon a mutually agreed upon plan for research and writing. PSU

requires that students be registered for credit during any term in which they are doing work on any aspect of their thesis. This rule means that students can expect feedback, comments, and other active forms of supervision only when registered for 503 or 506. While only 8 credits may count toward degree requirements, it is possible to register for credits beyond that, if deemed necessary and appropriate.

The culminating activity for the master's degree is a final oral examination of the project or thesis, usually referred to as a "defense." Typically, the student's academic advisor directs the thesis or project and serves as the chair of the faculty committee for the defense. The defense is conducted by the faculty committee but it is open to the public. Students must be enrolled for at least one credit during the term of their defense. Defense and graduation should take place in the same academic term. The chair also oversees any revisions needed to the final paper or thesis and submits the final grades and required forms to the program office and Graduate School. It is the student's responsibility to file their final paper with the CR program office or their final thesis with the Graduate School. See the Thesis and Project information in the Reference section of this handbook for more details.

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Navigating Graduate School

What?	How?
successfully earn admission to the program	Apply online & pay fees
complete 20 credits of required, sequenced courses, typically in a single academic year	use Student Registration Hub ("banweb") to sign up for classes
note: after 8 credits, non-matriculated students must have permission of instructor to enroll in subsequent courses	see Conflict Resolution program office
apply for graduation in the last term of course work	Apply for Graduation & pay fees

What?	How?
successfully earn admission to the program	Apply online
complete 22 credits of required courses, typically over 5 sequential terms of study	use Student Registration Hub ("banweb") to sign up for classes
apply for graduation in the last term of course work	Apply for Graduation

What?	How?
successfully earn admission to the program	apply online & pay fees
complete 54 credits of required coursework, including 8 credits of project or thesis	use Student Registration Hub ("banweb") to sign up for classes; use by-arrangement form as needed
obtain advisor approval of your thesis or project proposal and file your proposal with the GPC	typically this occurs upon complete of CR 522 (year 2)
for the thesis, create your committee & file with the Graduate School	GO-16 form
for the project, create your committee & file with the GPC	harrya@pdx.edu
Once work has begun on your thesis or project, communicate your defense schedule with the Conflict Resolution program coordinator	kmarti@pdx.edu , Defense Room Request Form
apply for graduation in the term that you defend your thesis or project	Apply for graduation online & pay fees
successfully defend the project or thesis and make any revisions as directed in writing by the committee chair	
for thesis, file the final version according to the Graduate School's specifications and deadlines	thesis requirements for upload
for project, the final paper should be sent the chair, who forwards the final version to the Conflict Resolution Program Coordinator	kmarti@pdx.edu
MA/MS students can also receive either or both of the preceding Graduate Certificates by selecting "add" on the GO-19 form	file the GO-19 form & apply to graduate & pay fees. Note: students must apply separately for each credential/degree they seek from PSU.

Satisfactory Academic Progress & Dismissal

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is an on-going feature of enrollment and is under the purview of the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC). Students can expect to hear from the GPC at least once a year regarding their SAP in Conflict Resolution, in an annual letter that will become part of the student's Progress File.

In general, graduate students should keep in mind the University's rules for academic probation and disqualification based on GPA (grade point average), as stated in the PSU Bulletin. Graduate Students who fall below a cumulative GPA of 3.00, based on at least nine letter-graded graduate credits, are placed on academic probation and the Program will be noticed of such by the Graduate School.

Dismissal may also result from academic misconduct as defined in the PSU Student Code of Conduct. The code addresses issues of plagiarism, fraud, and academic integrity. Read [more about academic honesty in the Bulletin](#).

Students are required to make satisfactory progress toward their degree or they may be dropped from the Conflict Resolution program. The following are conditions for Satisfactory Academic Progress:

Students will be registered for each term of the academic year following their admission to the program unless they (1) defer their start of the program or (2) they file a request for a leave of absence with an explanation and a term they will be returning (see below).

A grade of C+ or below in a Conflict Resolution course is substandard, and means that the student is not making satisfactory progress.

Students who leave an incomplete on their transcript past the agreed deadline for completion of the work--or a year, whichever comes first--are not making satisfactory progress.

If a faculty member resigns from serving as the student's advisor, the student has two terms to secure a new advisor or they may be dismissed from the program.

Every professional project or thesis credit must have a student contract that specifies the work to be done during the term. If a negligible amount of work was done, then the student is not making satisfactory progress.

Admitted students not in a double master's program who have taken only non-Conflict Resolution courses that do not meet elective requirements for two consecutive terms are not making satisfactory progress.

Admitted students who are taking only electives and are not making progress with required courses for two consecutive terms are not making satisfactory progress.

Students must abide by all of the requirements of the PSU Graduate School and the Student Conduct Code.

Students must be making appropriate progress on their practicum and professional project or thesis. Registering for practicum, project, or thesis credits and not making progress on these activities is unsatisfactory progress.

The nature of remediation for failure to achieve Satisfactory Academic Progress will be determined on a case by case basis according to individual circumstances. The Graduate Program Coordinator will send the student a letter and the student will need to schedule a meeting within two weeks to discuss remediation. A written plan with measurable goals will be put into place. Unless otherwise agreed to at this meeting, students will have one academic term to achieve satisfactory progress or admission to the program may be cancelled.

Leaves of Absence and Re-enrollment

The Conflict Resolution graduate program is based on a cohort model of pedagogy. Planned two years in advance, annual course offerings are set, rather than flexible. The program is not designed to be self-paced nor it is conducive to distance learning. The master's program is intended for completion in two years (six academic terms), excluding summer. If you are a student whose life or financial circumstances do not permit consistent enrollment during the academic year (fall, winter, spring), you should consider another program that better meets your needs. Admitted graduate students in Conflict Resolution are expected to register for credit each term during the academic year or else request a leave of absence. A leave of absence is not required for summer term.

To request a leave of absence, complete the Graduate School's [leave of absence form](#). For students in good academic standing, the Graduate Program Coordinator can approve a first leave for a variety of reasons. For a first leave, the Graduate School generally follows the program's recommendation.

A second leave request will require fuller explanation of the circumstances involved to both the Graduate Program Coordinator and the students' advisor. The Graduate School's policy is not to approve more than two leaves of absence.

If students fail to register for graduate credits for a year or more, re-enrollment is required. The [re-enrollment request form](#) goes first to the program director in Conflict Resolution. However, the Director will not approve re-enrollment without the approval (email is sufficient) of the student's advisor. Therefore, students should consult with their academic advisor before submitting a re-enrollment form.

Seven Year Limit on Credits

PSU sets a limit of seven years on the validity of credits applicable to any master's or graduate certificate program. The Graduate School provides a process for validating by examination any credits that are more than seven but not more than ten years old up to one-third of the total required credits for the credential/degree. After ten years, graduate coursework fully expires without hope of validation via examination. These credits are lost.

For more information on expired credits, [read the policy and form](#).

Students who have credits older than seven years are not necessarily disqualified from the program; however, they must continue to make Satisfactory Academic Progress as defined in this Handbook. Students with extenuating circumstances may petition the PSU Graduate Council for exceptions to the expired credits rule but neither the Program nor the Graduate Council are likely to extend the deadlines other than in exceptional circumstances.

Please note that approved leaves of absence do NOT stop the clock on the seven year rule.

For students interested in the master's degree, the attainment of a Graduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution or a Graduate Certificate in Applied Conflict Resolution does NOT stop the clock on the seven year rule.

Petitions

Students who are facing unusual circumstances may petition the Graduate Program Coordinator for an exemption or waiver from any of the program's rules regarding disqualification. Students should present their request in writing to the GPC together with any supporting evidence. The GPC, in consultation with the student's advisor and Program Director, may waive the rule in question.

Extenuating circumstances may include (but are not limited to) situations which, in an employment context, would result in a personal or family medical leave. Obligations outside of graduate study, such as typical employment-related or family responsibilities, generally do not constitute extenuating circumstances. Students are expected to plan their graduate program by taking such ongoing commitments into account. Sudden or unexpected changes in external obligations may constitute extenuating circumstances for one or two terms, but not on an extended basis. In the latter situation, a leave of absence may be the appropriate solution.

Petitions regarding PSU policies must be petitioned to the Graduate Council through the process outlined in [the petition policy and form](#).

Appeals regarding academic misconduct are handled according to the PSU [student code of conduct](#).

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Frequently Asked Questions

Can I get financial aid for graduate study?

Yes, all graduate credentials and degrees in Conflict Resolution are financial aid eligible.

I missed the application deadline. What are my options now?

PSU permits completion of up to 8 graduate credits before matriculation to the Graduate School. However, Conflict Resolution strongly encourages all students to formally apply to the program as early as possible in order to receive appropriate guidance for optimal pursuit of their educational goals. Most students who miss the May deadline can apply in October without significant impingement on their studies.

I need help figuring out the application. Who can assist me?

The Conflict Resolution Graduate Program Coordinator can answer basic questions about the application process but is not available for mentoring or previewing of application materials. For assistance with the technology of applying (i.e., the online portal) contact the Graduate School at grad@pdx.edu.

Do I have to take my courses sequentially or can I proceed self-paced?

The Conflict Resolution graduate program is designed to support student learning during the regular three-term academic year (fall, winter, spring). Students are expected to take required courses in the sequence intended as illustrated in the program overview section above. Elective courses may involve more flexible scheduling and sequencing.

Is distance learning an option in Conflict Resolution?

No. Distance learning is not available at this point.

What is the difference between the Graduate Certificate and the Graduate Certificate in Applied Conflict Resolution.

The Graduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution is a foundational set of 20 required credits. The Graduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution is 22 credits, and includes electives. Very few applicants are admitted directly to the Applied certificate; typically students start with the foundational certificate and then apply to move ahead to the Applied certificate (or full master's).

I don't have any background in conflict resolution. Do I have to apply to the Certificates first before I can apply for the master's degree?

No, not necessarily. You are welcome to apply directly to the degree program of your choice. But if you want to just test out the field, then the Certificate in CR is a great way to get started. If you continue on, the application fee is reduced.

What is the difference between an MA and an MS in Conflict Resolution?

The only difference between the degrees is that the MA requires a second language.

How long will it take to finish my master's degree?

The program is designed to be completed in two years.

If I do a project rather than a thesis, do I still have to defend my work?

Yes. The culminating activity for the master's degree is a final oral examination of the project or thesis, usually referred to as a "defense." The defense is a public presentation that typically involves a presentation with powerpoint to the student's committee and other guests, with Q&A and discussion.

Can I attend another student's "defense" in order to better understand what takes place?

Yes! The defense is a public event and the entire Conflict Resolution program is invited. It is strongly recommended that graduate students attend defenses in CR to learn about the process as well as in order to show support for fellow students.

Dispute Resolution	Peace Building	Violence Prevention	Environmental
CR 539/CR 540 Peer/Family Mediation	CR 546 Human Rights & Conflict Resolution	CR 542 Peace Education	CR 510 Environmental Conflict Resolution
CR 523 Dialogue across Differences	CR 548 Transitional Justice	CR 517 Nonviolence	EMS 510 Environmental Justice
CR 520 Reconciliation Processes	PHL 546 International Ethics	CR 519 Forgiveness & Atonement	PHL 549 Sustainability

Thesis Information

What is a thesis?

A thesis is one of two options to complete your Master's degree in Conflict Resolution (the other option is writing a professional project). Students develop a research question based in the literature of the chosen topic, and then design a research study that attempts to answer that research question. The goal of writing a thesis is to demonstrate your capacity to conduct academic research that contributes relevant knowledge to the field of conflict resolution and peace studies, demonstrating a professional competence in joining the field as a peace scholar and/or practitioner.

Who among the faculty can direct my thesis?

Tenured and tenure-track Conflict Resolution faculty with expertise in the topic of your research can direct your thesis and "chair" your thesis committee.

What is a thesis committee?

A thesis committee is a faculty committee that evaluates your thesis as a piece of scholarship and conducts the oral examination of the thesis, typically called a "defense." Thesis committees typically consist of three faculty members from PSU. While the chair is expected to have expertise in the topic of the thesis, the other two committee members may have expertise in your research method or in some aspect of the subject being studied. The thesis takes an interdisciplinary approach; it can be of value to have committee members who reflect that aspect of your research, with no more than one member serving from outside the Conflict Resolution faculty.

Can a community partner be involved in thesis work?

Having a community partner is not a requirement for thesis students. However, students who choose to do a thesis may engage a community partner whose work is relevant to their thesis topic. Students who wish to engage a community partner in order to write their thesis are to consult with their chair to make sure that the community partner is relevant to their area of research and can add value to the thesis. Research institutes, NGOs, governmental organizations, or international organizations may be chosen following consultation with the thesis chair.

Who can write a thesis?

Any admitted MA/MS student who has successfully completed coursework is eligible to submit a proposal to write a thesis. Students should bear in mind that (1) your chair and committee will be most supportive if the student has been successful in coursework and has demonstrated strength in the writing assignments of the required courses and research methods course; (2) whether there is a tenure-related faculty member with the expertise in your interest area to chair a thesis; and (3) whether the chair has space in their schedule to advise the thesis in a reasonable timeline for completion.

What are the elements of the pre-proposal?

A pre-proposal is a two-page sketch of the thesis, and should include the topic, the research question, and the proposed methodology. Some reference to the literature should be made to establish how these three elements connect to what is known about the topic.

What is a thesis proposal?

The thesis proposal is an expanded version of the pre-proposal, which includes a working title, a problem statement that establishes compelling reasons for the research, a research question and planned research study designed to answer the question; a brief literature review to contextualize the topic, the question, and the research design, a discussion of expected outcomes or results; a list of academic references and sources; an IRB application (if needed); and a timeline for completion.

What are the components of a completed thesis?

The completed thesis expands on each section of the proposal and also includes an analysis section, leading to the conclusions of the inquiry. The paper should follow APA citation style and be thoroughly edited and proofed for errors before submitting the final draft to your committee.

The thesis as a publication and public document.

Completed and approved theses are considered public documents, and are collected by the PSU library for online access at the PDXscholar segment of the library's website. Conflict Resolution master's theses are found at https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/conflict_theses/

Step	Process	Timeline	Responsible	Outcome
1	select a thesis chair and two committee members	typically during the 2nd year of study, student selects a chair and committee, and meets with them to develop a pre-proposal, proposal, and ultimately, the thesis	student	committee is formed
2	develop a pre-proposal	work with your chair and committee to develop a pre-proposal that explains your idea for a thesis, your research question, the research plan, and the connection to the academic literature	student and chair	pre-proposal is shared with committee and once approved, filed with GPC
3	complete the full proposal	proposal is completed and submitted to the chair and committee	student and committee	committee approval of proposal
4	IRB application	Student work with chair to complete the IRB application, if needed. Your chair is the Primary Investigator on the research application	student and chair	IRB application submitted, and any changes/modifications are made in a timely fashion

5	conduct research	following the research designed detailed in the proposal and/or IRB application, student will collect data, analyze it according to the conventions of research method, and form findings	student	data is collected, analyzed, and findings are established
6	complete paper	student engages their committee as needed to complete their paper, soliciting feedback on findings, conclusions, and areas of future research	student and committee	paper is completed
7	schedule thesis defense	defenses are scheduled with the committee members no sooner than two weeks after the final draft has been submitted to all parties.	student and program coordinator	defense is scheduled, room is assigned, and an email is sent to the CR student list-serve
8	defend	check Graduate School deadlines (see "Navigating Graduate School" above) to ensure requirements for graduation are met	student	student gives a 20-30 minute presentation, sharing key findings with committee and audience (typically with PPT)
9	complete revisions	revisions are typically due within two weeks of the defense date, and submitted to the Graduate School according to their format and deadlines (see "Navigating Graduate School" above)	student and chair	final thesis is submitted to chair and uploaded to the PSU Graduate School

Professional project information

What is a professional project?

A professional project is one of two options to complete your master's degree in Conflict Resolution (the other option is to write a thesis). A project is an opportunity to synthesize learning with practice by engaging your knowledge and expertise with a community need for conflict resolution application. The goal is to demonstrate your competencies both to our academic program and to the professional world, both of which serve your future goal as a conflict resolution practitioner.

Who can be a chair?

Any Conflict Resolution faculty member can chair your project, depending on your focus and the number of projects that the faculty member is already supervising.

Who can be a community partner?

Any community organization that is experiencing conflict can serve as the source of your professional project. Students work with the community partner to establish the need for a conflict resolution project, and to ensure that the project will be a valuable and enduring community asset. The community partner may have a varied amount of participation in your project. Minimally, a representative of the community partner must approve your project proposal in writing and, when the project is complete, provide a letter that affirms its value. The community partner is encouraged to attend the project meeting and the project defense.

What are the elements of a project proposal?

The project proposal should including the following elements: a working title; a problem statement/needs assessment establishing a compelling reason for the project; information about the community partner, explaining how its interest fit into the field of conflict resolution; brief literature review situating the project within the discipline; a project plan; an expected project outcome; a project evaluation plan; a list of academic references and sources; a timeline for completion.

What are the elements of a project paper?

The final project paper expands on each section of the proposal and should be between 25-50 pages in length when completed, including references and appendices. The paper should follow APA citation style and be thoroughly edited and proofed before submitting the final draft to your committee.

Step	Process	Timeline	Responsible	Outcome
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1	select project chair and 2nd committee member	typically during the 2nd year, chair is elected and regular meetings commence to develop the proposal and, ultimately, the project paper	student	**committee is formed
2	determine community partner	selection can happen in advance or or simultaneously with committee selection	student	community partner agrees to work with student
3	develop proposal	based on needs of community partner, student creates a proposal that relates to the field of conflict resolution. chair approves draft and sends to full committee	student and chair	proposal is shared with committee (chair, 2nd faculty member, and community partner)
4	IRB Application	student works with chair to complete the IRB application, if needed. Your chair is the Primary Investigator on the research application	student and chair	IRB application submitted, and any changes/modifications are made in a timely fashion https://www.pdx.edu/research/research-integrity-compliance-programs
5	set a proposal meeting	as soon as the proposal is complete, get all parties together to agree on scope and details	student, chair, 2nd faculty member, and community partner	signed proposal by all parties
6	complete the project	depending on the circumstances this can take weeks to months	student	completed project (distinct from project paper) for the community project

7	complete the project paper	parts of the paper can be written in advance of, simultaneously with, or after the project. Final paper is done after completion of project.	student	draft of paper is submitted to chair for feedback; final draft submitted to full committee no less than two weeks prior to planned defense
8	schedule project defense	project defense can be scheduled as soon as final draft has been submitted to all	student and CR office	defense is scheduled, room is assigned, and email sent to CR faculty and students
9	defend	defenses can be scheduled at any time (except finals week) that allows 2 weeks for reading and two weeks for revision	student	student gives a 20-30 minute presentation sharing key project elements to the committee and audience (typically using PPT)
10	complete revisions	revisions are typically due within two weeks of the defense date	student and chair	final paper submitted to chair for sign off
11	project filed with CR office	chair sends approved project paper to CR office	chair and CR office coordinator	documentation of project

****According to the Office of Graduate Studies. "In the case of non-thesis final oral examinations, including final project presentations, the committee shall consist of at least two members of the student's department, including the student's adviser. At the discretion of the department, a faculty member from another department may be added; that member would be selected by the adviser, the department chair, or the departmental graduate committee chair, according to department policy. For MAT and MST students, one member of the committee is required to be added from the College of Education or a faculty member with pedagogical expertise in the student's discipline".**

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