Harnessing the Power of the World Wide Web for Conflict Studies Courses

by Bill Warters

The World Wide Web is rapidly becoming an essential part of academic life. Email has become virtually unavoidable, campus libraries are serving up electronic full-text resources like never before, and first year students are routinely being provided with computers for use in their rooms. At the same time, faculty members are being encouraged to put at least some portion of their materials online and to make use of courseware tools like Blackboard, WebCT, or TopClass to manage their courses and connect with students.

Our new information technology is exciting and rich with potential, but at the same time it often feels a bit overwhelming and unfathomable. To help address these concerns, this article presents a range of ways that relevant information from the web can be located quickly and used to good advantage by faculty teaching conflict studies courses or workshops.

Course Development Tasks

Given the rapid emergence of conflict resolution related courses and programs (see Warters, 2000 (http://www.josseybass.com/cda/product/0,,078794789X,00.html) and Polkinghorn and Chenail, 2000 (http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportArticles/Edition1_2/Grad_adr1_2.html)), many faculty now find themselves faced with the responsibility of preparing new conflict studies courses. While faculty vary in their course design methods, this process typically involves a number of discrete steps such as

- Clarifying **course goals & objectives** and its place within the broader campus curriculum,

- Locating **examples of similar**

courses,

- Identifying **relevant course texts** and then choosing among them,
- Identifying **relevant journal articles** and **web-based info** to supplement the texts,
- Developing a coherent set of **in-class and out-of-class learning activities**,
- Developing a **grading and assessment strategy**.

In this article, I will point readers toward web-based materials or tools that can help them accomplish each of these tasks quickly and resourcefully. Be forewarned, however, that this article also invites you to do a good bit of surfing, so it may take some time to get through if you're a curious type.

Clarifying Course Goals and Objective

Course planning efforts can be greatly enhanced (and wasted effort minimized) if one gets clear early on about the basic goals and objectives of the course. It is helpful to think about how your course relates to other conflict resolution courses available on campus, and to talk with faculty teaching these other courses to avoid covering the same material in courses that may have overlapping students. I have found the Visioning Your Course outline from UC Irvine to be a particularly succinct guide for clarifying the task you have before you. Consider printing a copy and using it to think through your basic course plan. For a somewhat more theoretical discussion of the instructional design process and current concepts of active and higher learning you might wish to view the materials provided by the University of Oklahoma Instructional Development Program.

Looking for Examples of Other Courses

While we don't yet have a fully centralized web depository for conflict studies course syllabi, a number of online collections are now available that can provide useful insight into how people are structuring their courses and what materials they are finding most pertinent. The following links lead to groupings of relevant course outlines for possible review.

Five College Program Peace and World Security Studies Curriculum Project
(http://pawss.hampshire.edu/faculty/curriculum/index.html)

Course Web Pages
(http://empathy.colstate.edu/course_webs.htm#conflict

) for conflict and communication classes from the EMPATHY project

[Directory of College and University Peace Studies Programs](http://csf.colorado.edu/peace/academic.html) (http://csf.colorado.edu/peace/academic.html) (Includes Links to Online Syllabi)

[International Peacekeeping Syllabi](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Watson_Institute/peaceoperations/syllabi/index.html) (http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Watson_Institute/peaceoperations/syllabi/index.html) collection from courses on various aspects of UN-sanctioned peace operations

[Law School ADR Course Outlines from FindLaw](http://lawschools.findlaw.com/outlines/dispute.html) (http://lawschools.findlaw.com/outlines/dispute.html)

If you don't mind browsing a bit (and perhaps getting distracted by interesting side trips), you can also try searching for the term "syllabus" combined with some of your core topic words (try "conflict resolution" or "mediation" for example) using a search engine limited to the educational (.edu) domain. SearchEdu.com is one site that does this for you automatically. You can also use domain limiting search options built into existing engines. For example, at AltaVista.com, adding the search term "domain:edu" (without the quotes) to your basic query limits all your hits to those found at educational servers.

If you're not in a hurry or you wish to plan ahead for next term (what a concept!), the web can also facilitate the ordering of bound syllabi collections. A prime example is the [Conflict Management Syllabi Collection](http://www.gmu.edu/departments/ICAR/ICAR_PUB_ORDER.html) (http://www.gmu.edu/departments/ICAR/ICAR_PUB_ORDER.html) from George Mason's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution. The George Mason University program is one of the most well-established conflict studies programs in the country, and the first to offer a Ph.D. specifically in the field. You might also want to check on the availability of the excellent 1998 Conflict Resolution Syllabi Sampler published by NIDR/CREnet, or the ASA's [Teaching Peace and War](http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportResources/Edition1_3/Reviews1_3.html) (http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportResources/Edition1_3/Reviews1_3.html) collection mentioned in this issue.

Locating Appropriate Textbooks

As the conflict management field matures the number of relevant books is growing rapidly. The field is also by nature interdisciplinary. This combination makes keeping track of key books somewhat challenging, as useful books may be published in areas that are outside your "home" discipline. A 1995 delphi study (see [Warters, 1999](http://www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr/2_2warters.htm) (http://www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr/2_2warters.htm)) addressed this question by asking a mixed group of conflict studies faculty to identify

and rank key works in the field. This produced a list of core texts (http://www.campus-adr.org/Main_Library/books/delphireadings.html) that while remarkably diverse, helped map out the field. Catherine Morris, former director of the UVic Institute for Dispute Resolution has developed a great resource (see Readings in Dispute Resolution: A Select Bibliography (http://peacemakers.ca/bibliography/bibintro99.html)) that incorporates these readings and that is regularly updated and nicely categorized. Definitely worth a visit.

If you are interested in more descriptive or critical annotations of the books, you may wish to scan the reviews of dispute resolution literature produced by the late James Boskey in his *Alternative Newsletter*. Six issues of his reviews (March, 1999 (http://www.mediate.com/tan/currentissue/altlit.cfm) - November, 1998 (http://www.mediate.com/tan/1198/altlit.cfm) - July, 1998 (http://www.mediate.com/tan/0798/altlit.htm) - March, 1998 (http://www.mediate.com/tan/0398/altlit_0398.htm) - November, 1997 (http://www.mediate.com/tan/1197/altlit_1197.htm) - July, 1997 (http://www.mediate.com/tan/0797/altlit.htm)) are posted online. To avoid having to scroll through the whole long text, in issues that don't provide a table of contents, you might want to use the "find in page" feature of your browser to search for authors or titles you are interested in.

A number of publishers are also now specializing in conflict studies. For example, check out the growing list of offerings at Jossey-Bass (http://www.josseybass.com/topics/16000/index.html); Sage Publications (http://www.sagepub.com/) (search on the word "conflict"); Syracuse University Press (http://sumweb.syr.edu/su_press/) (go "books in print" ---> "series listing" --->"Syracuse Studies on Peace and Conflict Resolution"); or Harvard's Program on Negotiation (http://www.pon.org/results.cfm?typelist=B). To search a varied group of university presses all at once, you can access the Association of American University Presses Online Catalog. I recommend searching on keywords for this one.

Deciding who to give your money to when you purchase a book is really a personal decision. If you don't want to or cannot order directly from a press or a local bookstore, you can use a variety of online stores to make your purchase. In addition to using individual stores like Amazon.com or Borders.com or Barnes and Noble (bn.com), if you know the title or ISBN of a book you are interested in, you can easily do comparison price shopping using tools like MySimon.com that check all the major online book dealers. Or you might wish to purchase from one of the bookstores hosted by organizations specializing in conflict resolution, such as the Academy of Family Mediators or the Network: Interaction for Conflict Resolution (http://www.nicr.ca/main.asp?page=3) (a Canadian organization).
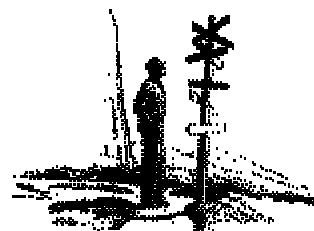
Locating Journals and Journal Articles

Most campus libraries now provide access to electronic reference services (FirstSearch, UnCover, WorldCat etc.) that can be used to help you track down articles pertinent to your work across a broad range of publications. Because libraries access these services by subscription, you usually have to be using a campus computer on the right network or have a password to gain access to them. Many of these tools can be accessed remotely (i.e., from home) if you have the password and correct dial-up number or web address, so you may want to check into it. FindArticles.com is a newly launched commercial service that provides free full-text articles from a range of journals and magazines. A number of free federally-sponsored databases are also available for searching via the web, most notably ERIC (http://ericir.syr.edu/Eric/) (providing broad coverage of the education field, including higher education) and the Library of Congress (http://www.loc.gov/catalog/) (not designed to locate articles, but good for books, manuscripts, films, etc.).

In addition to articles appearing in the traditional discipline-based journals in sociology, psychology, political science, management, etc., there is a growing number of specialized journals specifically supporting the conflict studies field. The list of dispute resolution journals maintained by Nova Southeastern University's Department of Dispute Resolution reveals the growing range of publications now available. This list also provides links to the actual publications or to their publishers. Some of these journal sites will let you search their archives as well.

While it is not a journal per se, you may also wish to visit Mediate.com's Resolution Magazine (http://www.mediate.com/resolution.cfm) and check out their growing list of brief full-text articles on conflict resolution related topics. You can now search by topic to get quickly to the articles of interest to you.

To assist your research, library support staff sometimes produce specialized subject guides that point the way to relevant library resources. You may want to check locally to see if your library has developed anything on conflict resolution or peace studies. For a rather extensive example, check out the George Mason University Library subject guide on conflict management (http://library.gmu.edu/), which while designed to serve GMU faculty and students, includes links to non-password dependent materials as well.

Personally, I have found the use of citation and reference management software to be extremely helpful for keeping track of and appropriately using references that I have located. The latest versions of many of these permit you to hook up to library databases and directly search and then import references into your local computer. They also greatly facilitate the formatting for references in different styles depending on the publication you are writing for. My personal and longtime favorite

is EndNotes (http://www.endnote.com/ENinfo.htm%00) from ISI ResearchSoft. Reviews of the full range of bibliographic programs (http://www-writing.berkeley.edu/chorus/eresearch/) is available from the UC Berkeley Writing Program if you want to shop for a program that meets your specific needs. Most of these programs also have a special educational discount price, so you may want to check with your campus bookstore or sites like StudentDiscounts (http://www.studentdiscounts.com/) before purchasing.

A number of free searchable reference **collections focusing specifically on conflict studies** are available online. These collections vary with respect to the amount of information provided, and some of them return information on articles or working papers that can be quite hard to put your hands on.

> Conflict Research Consortium
> (http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/cgi-
> bin/Database_search/db_searchsamp.cgi?setup_file=bib
> _setup.data) (large, built using reference lists from
> various Hewlett Theory-building Centers, resulting in
> sometimes inconsistent levels of information)

> Conflict Resolution Center International
> (http://www.conflictres.org/libinfo.html) (particularly
> helpful for identifying items that were not published in
> mainstream sources)

> Restorative Justice Online
> (http://www.restorativejustice.org/) (nice collection of
> articles and abstracts on Victim Offender Mediation
> related topics)

> Indiana Conflict Resolution Institute
> (http://www.spea.indiana.edu/icri/datalist.htm)
> (emphasizes empirical field studies and program
> evaluations on conflict resolution)

> Law.com (while not exclusively focused on conflict
> issues, the site does provides access to full-text law-
> related ADR articles)

> Readings in Dispute Resolution: A Select Bibliography
> (http://peacemakers.ca/bibliography/bibintro99.html) (a
> subject oriented bibliography maintained by Catherine
> Morris as noted above)

In addition to traditional textbooks and journal articles, conflict studies courses can be greatly enhanced through use of information found only on the web. The type of information you may find useful will vary based on your course, but it may include online essays, databases, cases studies, photos or audio and video clips, and various kinds of multimedia demonstrations and training activities. For the purposes of

this article I will highlight a few general search aides first, and then point the reader toward some of the case studies, roleplays, and learning activities now available online.

Searching the Web for Relevant Information

A lot has been written on strategies for effectively searching the web. One of the most informed collections of this kind of information is found at the Search Engine Watch (http://searchenginewatch.com/firsttime.html) site. The site is dedicated to keeping up with the changing world of web search tools, and thus is quite informative regarding how various engines rank and categorize their findings.

Also very helpful is the Search Strategy Page (http://nuevaschool.org/%7Edebbie/library/research/adviceengine.html) developed by the librarians of California's Nueva School. This site helps you identify the most appropriate search engines for the job based on your specific needs. Another nice listing of specialized research tools and directories (http://edweb.sdsu.edu/webquest/searching/specialized.html) is the one written by Bernie Dodge, developer of the WebQuest concept (more on this later).

Just as important as finding the right search tool is the development of a good set of search terms. Writing a good search query (http://websearch.about.com/internet/websearch/library/weekly/aa022100a.htm) is really an art given the vastness of the Web. Once you've got a search phrase that seems to bring back the kind and amount of information you are interested in, you may wish to **automate the use of it** to keep track of new information that comes available. I have had good luck building my campus conflict resolution information collection using a nice tool called the Informant, which has sinced merged with TracerLock (http://www.tracerlock.com/), from Dartmouth University. The tool permits you to enter up to three different queries. At a periodic interval which you specify the Informant uses the Altavista, Lycos, Excite, and Infoseek search engines to find the ten Web pages that are most relevant to your keywords. If a new page appears in the top ten, or if one of the pages from your previous top ten list has been updated, the Informant sends you an e-mail message. Once you receive the e-mail, you return to the Informant where you will find a table of the Web pages that are new or updated. Or, if you prefer, they will include the URL's of the new or updated web pages in the e-mail that gets sent to you.

The other auto-search tool I use is called the Northern Lights Search Alert

(http://www.northernlight.com/docs/alerts_help_about.html) service. The Northern Lights service works in a similar fashion to The

Informant, but it searches using the Northern Lights' own Web index, one of the largest on the Web. The Northern Lights tool is also nice because it presorts your "hits" into various subject folders, so you can quickly narrow the range of what you are looking at. In addition to canvassing the Web, Northern Lights locates full-text articles found within their special collection. A document delivery service that makes these articles immediately available for a fee.

So-called **Power Users** will appreciate the sophisticated and little-known browser add-ons available at no cost at the Bookmarklets site (http://www.bookmarklets.com/). These mini Java-scripted bookmarks do a wide range of jobs (see especially the MoreInfo tool) for you when chosen from your browser's list of bookmarks. Bookmarklets allow you to modify the way you see someone else's webpage, extract data (links, emails, index of words) from a webpage, and search and navigate in new ways. Over 150 bookmarklets are available.

People who spend a lot of time searching for information may also appreciate the now free browser add-on from Intelliseek called BullsEye 2 (http://info.intelliseek.com/prod/be_download.htm) (available for Windows users only). The tool gives you rapid access to information by searching over 800 search engines and information sources on the Web. You can also refine or organize the results, save the findings, pick up where you left off, or work off-line. Additionally, you can create your own reports and send them to colleagues. Pretty handy.

While the aforementioned search tools are certainly valuable for getting a handle on the web, they are not specifically focused on conflict. Soon, however, conflict studies faculty and students will be able to take advantage of a new "one stop shopping" information site for people in the conflict resolution field. The CRInfo (http://www.crinfo.org/) project, funded by the Hewlett Foundation and profiled in an earlier issue (http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportArticles/Edition1_1/CRInfo1_1.html), represents a major step forward for conflict resolution information access. Data entry began in earnest this summer, and as of mid-August 2000, a beta-test version (http://www.crinfo.org/index.cfm) became available for initial exploration. The site will eventually offer a comprehensive set of print, web, and organizational data on conflict resolution. In terms of initial holdings, beta-testers will find that web-based resources are being entered into the system most rapidly at the start of the project, with the bulk of the more standard print publications scheduled for data entry later this year. Bugs are still being worked out in the structure and coding procedures, and a spell-check system is still being installed, so if you choose to do a beta-test, please be forgiving and helpful when pointing out inconsistencies.

Preparing Your Course Learning Activities

Note: While not easily categorized within the scheme of this article, readers may be quite interested in the recently posted slides and videoclips from the March 10-12 2000 Hewlett Conference focusing on Negotiation Pedagogy (http://www.pon.harvard.edu/events/hewlett/day1.shtml) held at Harvard University.

Classroom teaching activities take many forms. Perhaps the most common kind is the **formal lecture**. Typically lectures review and expand on assigned readings, provide course content not found in the readings, provide a broader context for an issue, or bring current events or case examples into discussion to ground course concepts in practical examples. Preparing lecture notes is a familiar chore for most faculty. However, the Internet provides a few new aids that might be worth a look.

Literature Summaries - As you prepare your lectures consider scanning for information related to your session's topic in the collection of summaries of major works in the conflict resolution by the Conflict Research Consortium. The set of several hundred abstracts is available for searching via the Core Literature Abstracts (http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/abstract.htm) page. These summaries can be used to refresh your memory of books you've already read, help you summarize key points from a work, or extend the material covered in your course text or reader by connecting it to related works.

Data Sources - If you are looking for quickly available descriptive statistics or research data to provide some context for a class discussion, check out the Finding Data on the Internet (http://www.robertniles.com/data/) site developed by Robert Niles. It provides quick links to the full range of data sources online. If you are tracking ethnic conflicts around the world, you may wish to use INCORE's (http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/cds/countries/index.html) (Initiative on Conflict Resolution and Ethnicity) conflict data source, including their country guides and full text of recent peace agreements. Another valuable source in this area is the Carter Center's Conflict Resolution Program (http://www.cartercenter.org/) which provides regular updates on world conflicts.

News and Current Events - Including information on current events helps to keep lectures relevant to student interests. A multitude of news sites are now available to provide all the news you could ever want. Some folks use "push" tools such as Excite's NewsTracker Clipping Service or PushCentral.com to follow current events and topics of particular interest. Individuals specifically interested in Arbitration and Mediation practice news may subscribe to the Recent Developments in Dispute Resolution (http://www.willamette.edu/law/wlo/dis-res/) newsletter list to receive biweekly updates on recent cases and court rulings related to ADR. ADRWorld.com provides a similar ADR News service via their website.

Despite these valuable information "push" services, most often, one must actively search to find stories and information on the particular dispute or issue you will be exploring in class. The American Journalism Review provides an extensive set of links to news sources from around the country (http://ajr.newslink.org/news.html) (including links to campus newspapers), many of which allow full-text searching of their archives. People with a particular interest in campus conflicts, for instance, may find the online archives of the Chronicle of Higher Education (http://www.chronicle.com/) (available free to subscribers of the Chronicle) to be an interesting source of case examples. Others may find more of use in the daily national papers like the New York Times or the Washington Post, or from stories covered by National Public Radio or documentaries from the Public Broadcasting System.

Specialized news outlets that may be of particular interest to conflict studies faculty include the American News Service (ANS) and the Pacific News Service (http://www.pacificnews.org/jinn/index.html). The American News Service focuses on what they call solution-oriented reporting that provides balanced views of difficult situations. The archives are searchable for free, but in order to access the full articles you must be a subscriber, which costs less than $20 per year for individuals. The Conflict Resolution Resource Center (an affiliate of Mediate.com) is an ANS subscriber, and you can find examples of ANS stories in the CRRC article collection (http://www.conflict-resolution.net/articles/index.cfm) if you want to get an idea of their style and content before subscribing.

The Pacific News Service (http://www.pacificnews.org/jinn/index.html) specializes in what they call a "chicken's eye view" of social life, "looking at the world from two feet off the ground -- through the lens of culture rather than of politics." Of particular interest is their regularly updated Civil Conflicts news archive (http://www.pacificnews.org/jinn/toc/conflicts.html) providing Interpretive Reports on Ethnic, Religious and Inter-National Conflicts Worldwide.

Case Studies - The World Wide Web is also becoming a great source for conflict case studies. In addition to cases you can pull together yourself based on news stories, there are now a number of sites that can help you find already summarized case examples.

> Conflict Resolution and Collaboration CASE STUDIES from the ELECTRONIC HALLWAY (http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportResources/Edition1_1/Reviews1_1.html#Electronic-Hallway) (reviewed in a previous issue)

> Conflict Research Consortium's (http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/case_all.htm) online case study database

[International and Environmental Dispute Case Study Database](http://www.american.edu/projects/mandala/TED/ice/ice.htm) (http://www.american.edu/projects/mandala/TED/ice/ice.htm) (from Inventory on Conflict and the Environment project at American University)

[CAIN](http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/) (http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/) (Conflict Archive on the Internet - provides a broad range of information on the **Northern Ireland Conflict** from 1968 to the present day.)

[Conflict and Collaboration in Natural Resource Management](http://www.idrc.ca/minga/conflict/cases_e.html) (http://www.idrc.ca/minga/conflict/cases_e.html) (Case Examples from International Development Research Centre)

Roleplays and Simulations

Use of mock mediations, facilitations, and negotiations enacted by students is a very common teaching technique in conflict resolution courses. This is especially true for courses with a skill training component. Because of the frequent use of roleplays, most folks are regularly on the lookout for new case scenarios to use in class or in workshops.

Sample **mediation roleplay scripts** are featured regularly in the REPORT (see [Vol. 1](http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportResources/Edition1_1/Roleplay1_1.html) (http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportResources/Edition1_1/Roleplay1_1.html) and [Vol. 2](http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportResources/Edition1_2/Roleplay1_2.html) (http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportResources/Edition1_2/Roleplay1_2.html) examples), and printed collections of mediation roleplays are occasionally noted in the REPORT's [Resource Reviews](http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportResources/Edition1_3/Reviews1_3.html#Carleton) (http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportResources/Edition1_3/Reviews1_3.html#Carleton) section.

Faculty interested in **negotiation simulation scripts** will want to check out the collections available from the [Harvard Program on Negotiation Clearinghouse](http://www.pon.org/) (http://www.pon.org/) and the [Northwestern University Negotiation and Decision-making Case Collection](http://www.kellogg.nwu.edu/research/drrc/teaching_materials.htm) ()http://www.kellogg.nwu.edu/research/drrc/teaching_materials.htm. While I am unclear on current availability, [Willamette University](http://www.mediate.com/tan/1197/altlit_1197.htm#b27) (http://www.mediate.com/tan/1197/altlit_1197.htm#b27) has regularly sponsored a simulation writing contest that has produced roleplay script collections as well.

Multimedia Teaching Tools

Movies and videos have always been a popular teaching tool. For those wishing search through the educational media universe (as opposed to popular films), the [National Information](#)
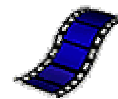
Center for Educational Media (http://www.nicem.com/trial.htm) provides a free trial password providing access to their database of more than 450,000 educational media titles. As the field of Alternative Dispute Resolution has expanded, more videos specifically addressing conflict resolution have become available. While this is exciting from an instructional point of view, they remain rather hard to track down, although a list of videos relating to peace studies (http://www.peace.ca/infovideo.htm) can be found online as well. In addition to videos aimed specifically at conflict resolution audiences, there have also been projects and conference presentations of late on using popular movies to teach conflict resolution themes. Along these lines, the Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute has developed a set of Conflict Resolution Leadership Case Studies (http://www.hartwick.edu/hhmi/topicsindex/conflictresolution.htm) based primarily on films, although the focus of the Institute's collection seems to lean more toward leadership than conflict resolution.

One of the outstanding multimedia training tools for campus use is the Allwyn Hall CD-ROM, a tool developed under a FIPSE grant for training residence life staff in basic conflict resolution skills. A few screenshots of the Allwyn Hall CD (http://www.culma.wayne.edu/CMHER/Cyber/LReslife.html) are available in the Resolve-it College site highlighted in the last issue. (Note: The Allwyn Hall website is down due to a change of servers, so you'll need to use the noted email address to get more information.)

Online Demonstrations and Tutorials

One nice benefit of the information technology era is the proliferation of online tutorials and demonstrations of many types. These materials can be used as homework assignments, or as in-class activity, or as part of a lecture demonstration of a core concept. Our field is developing it's own share of tools, especially in the area of negotiation skills. Links to some interesting examples are provided below.

> Interactive Tools for Teaching Negotiation
> (http://www.wvu.edu/%7Elawfac/mmcdiarmid/default.h
> tm) (See the Negotiation Course. Includes a spreadsheet
> exercise on BATNAs, and a negotiation introduction both
> developed by Marjorie McDiarmid using Adobe Acrobat)

> INSPIRE: a Web-based Negotiation Support System
> (http://interneg.org/inspire/) (developed by the
> InterNeg group at Carleton and Concordia Universities.
> You or your students negotiate over the web with a real
> but unknown opponent.)

> McGill Negotiation Simulator
> (http://ww2.mcgill.ca/icc/EdTech/edmedia.html)
> (computer-based interactive video simulation of
> business negotiations)

[OneAccord Negotiation Simulation](http://www.disputes.net/cyberweek2000/eventsfinal.htm#oneaccord)
(http://www.disputes.net/cyberweek2000/eventsfinal.htm#oneaccord) (Demo of a decision support and negotiation system, using hypothetical dispute between Syria and Israel set some thirty years in the future over the proposed building of a Disney themepark on or near what is presently referred to as the Golan Heights.)

[Myers-Briggs style Temperament Sorter](http://www.halverson-law.com/1-5.htm)
(http://www.halverson-law.com/1-5.htm) for use by Negotiators (by Lowell K. Halverson from his Negotiating Styles for Couples in Conflict site)

Mediation appears to be somewhat harder to simulate online based on the relative scarcity of sites offering demos. One sophisticated example worth a look is a computer-based conflict resolution "applet" developed by Ron Surratt called [The Mediator](http://www.mcn.org/c/rsurratt/conflict.html) (http://www.mcn.org/c/rsurratt/conflict.html).

Folks looking for Arbitration training tools may wish to examine the [CALI Arbitration Exercises](http://lessons.cali.org/cat-ARB.html) (http://lessons.cali.org/cat-ARB.html). The demonstration while not fancy by contemporary standards (i.e., few graphics and no video), does provide a nice introduction to what arbitration is and how it is conducted in various settings. To access the 5 lessons and the accompanying readings, your college (or more likely your Law School) must be a subscriber to CALI. Many schools are, and they are listed in a drop down list that you must use prior to accessing the lesson, so you have a quick way to find out.

While many online tools focus specifically on skill training or demonstrating new technologies, other sites are designed to introduce users to a set of important concepts (see for instance the [Roots of Social Conflict](http://www.fuhem.es/CIP/claves2.htm) (http://www.fuhem.es/CIP/claves2.htm) exposition), or to provide insight into a complex dispute. The CyberLearning website exploring a [Salmon Fishing Dispute](http://www.cyberlearn.com/online.htm) (http://www.cyberlearn.com/online.htm), or the [Conflict Yellowstone Wolves WebQuest](http://powayusd.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/mtr/ConflictYellowstoneWolf.htm) (http://powayusd.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/mtr/ConflictYellowstoneWolf.htm) are two good examples.

[WebQuests](http://edweb.sdsu.edu/webquest/webquest.html) (http://edweb.sdsu.edu/webquest/webquest.html) such as the Yellowstone Wolves example noted above are a wonderful way to integrate the web into your courses. In a future issue of the REPORT we will explore more fully the ins and outs of developing conflict WebQuests. The method has been used primarily in elementary and secondary schools, but as more college classroom and labs get wired-up the technique is migrating to college campuses as well. Clearly the potential for conflict studies courses is great.

Online Courses

A number of campuses are developing distance learning courses covering conflict resolution topics, and over time we should begin to

see a broader sharing of knowledge on how to best construct and deliver these types of programs. The International Online Training Program on Intractable Conflict (http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/) developed at the University of Colorado is a nice example of a more comprehensive conflict studies tutorial that is currently freely available. Developed with funds from the USIP and the Hewlett Foundation, the core training program consists of ten basic units--one on introductory theory, and nine others, each focusing on a particular category of problem. Each unit has a overview section and a number of more specialized subsections describing common problems and potential solutions. Examples give more information about particular problems, or how solutions have been applied in different situations.

Another nice example of an online course, still under construction, can be found at the University of Bradford's Department of Peace Studies. The course "Introduction to Conflict Resolution: Draft Distance Learning Course" (http://www.brad.ac.uk/acad/confres/dislearn/dislearn.html) is being developed by the staff at the Centre for Conflict Resolution, and at least for now is freely available for study and comment.

Developing a Assessment and Grading Strategy

It would be nice if the web also provided a solution to the challenges of assessment and grading. The use of integrated courseware packages like Blackboard and WebCT is growing on campus. These programs include gradebooks, and various quizzing, testing, and anonymous feedback systems as part of the package. As use of these test-building tools grows among conflict studies faculty, we may begin to see some sharing among faculty of their conflict resolution question-banks. This could be quite helpful over time.

While these new tools are nice and can help with course organization tasks, they really don't get at the underlying challenge of determining what and how to evaluate student learning and skill performance. Nor do they focus our attention on techniques for assessing how we are doing as instructors as the course unfolds. In an essentially applied field like Conflict Resolution, many programs include a significant amount of skill training. At the same time, most programs I'm aware of seem to rely mainly on student papers, essays and written exams for grading purposes. This seems like a bit of a disconnect to me. Figuring out how to appropriately assess conflict resolution skill acquisition within the academic context remains a going concern.

While the web can't directly answer these questions, it can provide some great food for thought. For instance, you may want to consider how your course relates to the various dispute resolution standards of practice (http://www.peacemakers.ca/links.html#standards) now in circulation. Are your students graded in a way that reflects mastery of these basic concepts? Or should academia have a different set of standards, raising the bar if you will, especially in terms of the

theoretical knowledge base. Our delphi study on graduate study in dispute resolution came up with a set of [core areas of knowledge and skills](http://www.mtds.wayne.edu/Tables.htm#Table3) (http://www.mtds.wayne.edu/Tables.htm#Table3) that might be used as one starting place for this discussion.

There is a lot of instructional support information on the web. For more generalized advice on grading, you might want to check out [Quizzes, Tests and Exams](http://www.hcc.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/quizzes.htm) (http://www.hcc.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/quizzes.htm) and [Grading Practices](http://www.hcc.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/grading.htm) (http://www.hcc.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/grading.htm) excerpted from **Tools for Teaching** by Barbara Gross Davis from University of California, Berkeley. For some basic advice on grading essays, visit [A Method for Grading Essays in Any Course](http://minerva.acc.virginia.edu/%7Etrc/tc96fcc.htm) (http://minerva.acc.virginia.edu/%7Etrc/tc96fcc.htm) by Candace Caraco.

If you're really keen on sharpening your teaching skills and course design methods across the board, you're in luck. The growing network of [Faculty and Instructional Development offices](http://tep.uoregon.edu/resources/librarylinks/fdc.html) (http://tep.uoregon.edu/resources/librarylinks/fdc.html) around the country are quite interested in these pedagogical challenges, and many provide online resources and workshops to assist faculty wanting to work in these areas. More workshops and conference sessions specifically addressing the teaching of conflict studies are now occurring as well (see for example the [Second Annual Legal Educators Colloquium](http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportEvents/NewsIndex.html#APRIL)) (http://www.campus-adr.org/CMHER/ReportEvents/NewsIndex.html#APRIL), suggesting that opportunities for networking and skill sharing among faculty are on the increase.

Conclusion

The World Wide Web has a tremendous amount to offer conflict studies faculty and conflict resolution skill trainers. Already we can relatively easily find sample course syllabi, specialized books, abstracts, full-text articles, news, and an interesting range of case studies and online tutorials all directly relevant to our field. And over time as bandwidths and modem speeds increase, and the number of academic conflict resolution programs and faculty grows, the harvest should be even richer. New tools like the CRInfo site should also help provide the field with a center of gravity on the net. And I believe we will be presented with many new opportunities to creatively collaborate on improving teaching quality and student and faculty satisfaction in conflict resolution courses and programs in the coming years. I hope many of you will join in these efforts when opportunity knocks. Clearly it is an exciting time for the field and for those of us teaching in it.

To provide quick access to many of the links found in this article, I've created a website entitled [Teaching Conflict Management Courses in Academia: Resources for Success](http://www.mtds.wayne.edu/Teach_Tools.html) (http://www.mtds.wayne.edu/Teach_Tools.html). While largely unannotated and not directly equivalent to this article, it does provide

a useful starting place for further exploration. Feel free to drop by at http://www.mtds.wayne.edu/Teach_Tools.html

Bill Warters, Ph.D. is the Editor of the *Conflict Management in Higher Education Report*. He teaches in the Master of Arts in Dispute Resolution program at Wayne State University.