

**Introductory Faculty Packet
for Educational Solutions University Dialogues
on the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict**

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Please visit our website to learn more about Educational Solutions: www.educationalsolutions.org

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1. INTRODUCTION: RECRUITING FACULTY PARTICIPANTS FOR 2009 AND 2010

The purpose of this packet is to introduce to university faculty the Educational Solutions University Dialogue project on the Israel/Palestine Conflict.

Educational Solutions is recruiting worldwide university faculty who would like their classes to study both sides of the conflict, as well as possible solutions. To date, 106 faculty from 11 countries are interested in participating in our project. Twenty-three professors are from Israel and the West Bank.

Faculty and students need to be proficient in English.

The program involves studying carefully balanced ES developed curriculum and dialoging with a partner university class via the ES Website and videoconferencing.

Possible departments include (but are not limited to) Middle Eastern Studies, International Relations, Sociology, Religion, Psychology, Critical Thinking, Communications.

Educational Solutions will be submitting major grants and seeking funds from individual donors in 2008 and 2009 for funding. To demonstrate support for the project, we are recruiting professors who are interested in participating in the program in 2009 and 2010.

We are recruiting professors, from all faith groups and belief systems, from Israel, Palestine, Muslim and non-Muslim nations. Professors can teach undergraduates or graduate students at universities, colleges, seminaries and other religious institutions, and junior colleges.

Once funding is received, Educational Solutions will work individually with participating professors to pair professors/classes for dialogue “across the divide.”

You are welcome to suggest colleagues “on the other side/across the divide” with whom you would like your class to dialogue. “Across the divide” can mean various combinations: an Israeli professor and a Palestinian professor; a U.S. Muslim professor and a U.K. Christian professor; a U.S. Jewish professor and a Jordanian Muslim professor; a U.S. professor and an Indonesian Muslim professor; a Palestinian Christian professor and an evangelical Christian professor.

We hope you will review this packet and allow us to list your name as interested in participating in the program in 2009 and/or 2010.

2. SHORT PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Problem

The Israel/Palestine conflict is the hundred-year struggle of Israelis and Palestinians for the same land. The struggle is complex, involving Jews and Arabs; Judaism, Islam, and Christianity; as well as nationalistic, regional, and geo-political interests. This violent struggle has had important repercussions throughout the Islamic world and the West. Media on both sides of the conflict tend to polarize opinion and inhibit discussion of solutions. An international university forum is needed so that the leaders of tomorrow can learn about all sides of the conflict, the history, perspectives and possible solutions, as well as dialogue about issues with each other in a civil manner.

The Educational Solutions Model for University Dialogue

The mission of Educational Solutions (ES), an Oregon nonprofit, is to enrich university education by providing global Internet-based forums for students to learn about and discuss challenging issues that divide communities and nations. ES has successfully developed and tested educational materials that present balanced information and conflict resolution practices to enable students to address divisive issues. Pairs of classes study the same curriculum and engage in informed civil dialogue on the ES Website and through videoconferencing.

Proposed International Israel/Palestine Dialogues

ES proposes the implementation of university course inserts on Israel/Palestine for international use in relevant university courses. Three of the ten curriculum units, 2) Claims to Israel/Palestine; 5) How Jewish suffering feeds the conflict, and 6) How Palestinian suffering feeds the conflict, are available for review at [HERE](#).

In April and May 2006, ES conducted its second pilot dialogue on the Israel/Palestine conflict. For one month, 24 students in an international relations class at the American University of Sharjah (AUS), United Arab Emirates, and 22 students in a western civilization class at the Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT), United States, studied the same ES-developed curriculum and dialogued via the ES Website and videoconferencing. At the end of this intense four-week course insert, 19/24 AUS and 15/22 OIT students were in class to complete a course evaluation in which they were asked to briefly state the most important point(s) they had learned.

Of 19 AUS students, 79% stated that the most important point(s) learned were both sides of the conflict and/or solutions to the conflict. Twenty-one percent responded more generally, saying that they had learned more about the origin or history of the conflict, or gained more information about the conflict. Of 15 OIT students, 67% responded that the most important point(s) learned were both sides of the conflict and/or solutions to the conflict. Five students (33%) responded more generally, saying that they learned the reasons for the conflict, that one cannot always trust the media, and that the conflict was hard to solve. Two students who gave general answers and one who noted both sides commented that they had known nothing about the conflict before the course insert and had learned a great deal. The individual student

responses are reported in the following section (Section 3) to convey student changes in perspective as a result of this course insert.

For the 34 AUS and OIT students, 100% said they gained a better understanding of the conflict. 97% said they improved their understanding of the Palestinian perspective. 100% said they improved their understanding of the Israeli perspective. 94% reported improvement in their critical thinking skills.

Program Objectives

Learning objectives include decreased stereotyping, as well as increased understanding and communication about the history, perspectives of the different sides, and possible solutions to the conflict. Educational Solutions' goal is to involve 200 universities and 4,000 students in international dialogue by 2011. ES plans to seek funding from individual donors and submit proposals in early 2008 for funding to begin in Fall 2009.

3. SAMPLE OF RESULTS FROM PILOT DIALOGUES IN 2006

Students from the American University of Sharjah and the Oregon Institute of Technology were asked, “What was the most important point(s) you learned?”

American University of Sharjah

19 students at the American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

NAb (AUS): How this conflict was originated, and if it is being implemented. Also certain themes that it was my first time to know about.

AAI (AUS): The history of the conflict.

MMk (AUS): Western view on the I/P conflict; Cooperation between the west and Arab world can work; With peaceful negotiations a solution would rise.

AAa (AUS): The most important point lesson that I've learned is the discussion of Palestinian refugees and Arab Jewish refugees.

SKh (AUS): All the new information.

MQa (AUS): Understanding achieved by dialogue.

NAI (AUS): Not everyone is really aware of the Palestinian crisis. There are different views toward the conflict. Some are serious about and some are not.

HSa (AUS): Different views that suggest a solution.

EAI (AUS): Listening to the other side is always beneficial, because even if we don't come up with solutions we will be reducing the amount of hatred and misunderstanding between different cultures and states.

KAI (AUS): The most important thing I have learned some more information about the Israel/Palestine module.

AOW (AUS): The Arc and the Jewish refugees.

WEI (AUS): I learned more about other alternatives on who may govern the state, either in splitting it up or keeping them together.

AFa (AUS): That the two sides have legitimate reasons for claiming the land as theirs.

SFa (AUS): About the Arc and a suggest future Palestine.

MFa (AUS): That their might be a solution other than war among both sides.

AFa (AUS): That cooperation and dialogue might be possible and a solution to the conflict if both sides [unreadable].

AAg (AUS): A rational dialogue between two parties in dispute is a strong basis for a fresh start.

MIa (AUS): View of American students on Israeli-Palestinian issue. View of both Israeli and Palestinian on this issue.

AAj (AUS): The possibilities for solutions to the conflict - what ideas, and thoughts have both sides came up with.

Oregon Institute of Technology

15 Oregon Institute of Technology Students

DBu (OIT): The backgrounds on pasts so as to understand the "why" and "how" and stuff.

SSp (OIT): Why there is so much of a conflict between Israel and Palestine.

RJo (OIT): What is happening in Palestine, why and how the Jews settled in Palestine, what happened to the Palestinians when the Jews settled, the current arguments between the two.

BBa (OIT): I learned a lot from this course. It was all important. I didn't know anything about Israel/Palestine before this.

NJo (OIT): That you can't always trust the media.

LCo (OIT): How both sides feel and their own personal claims.

CPi (OIT): Everything! I had no idea what was going on in Israel before this course.

AWr (OIT): That neither side can come to a resolution unless they understand the suffering of the other.

HFi (OIT): I have learned what the conflict is about. I really had no idea before.

DDg (OIT): There is a very hard to solve conflict going on between Israel and Palestine.

JWe (OIT): Historical roots for a conflict that I knew nothing about. I didn't really know what was going on between Israel/Palestine.

CBo (OIT): Both sides of the conflict, not just those presented by the media.

DSt (OIT): Further understanding of the Israel/Palestine conflict. I now feel informed about the issues.

MDu (OIT): What caused and is causing/fueling the Palestinian Israeli conflict. The possible solutions.

ACr (OIT): The level of suffering and hostility on each side.

4. FACULTY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

- Willingness to assign students to read all or part of ES curriculum insert, as if it were a text for class
- Willingness to teach both sides of IP conflict
- Willingness to require civil dialogue from students (classroom, ES Internet Forums, Videoconferencing)
- Ability of professor and students to speak, read and write in English
- Reliable videoconferencing equipment capable of international use and videoconferencing classroom
- Student access to Internet such that they can post three times a week and retrieve PowerPoint curriculum units three times a week
- Willingness to review the full ES curriculum and work with ES to finalize the syllabus
- Willingness to allow your name and affiliation to be listed on ES grant proposals with other professors interested in participating in this dialogue project

5. LINK TO THREE ES SAMPLE POWERPOINT UNITS

www.educationalsolutions.org/public/content/view/47/89

Unit 2. Claims to Israel Palestine

Unit 5. How Does the Suffering of the Jews Feed the Israel/Palestine Conflict?

Unit 6. How Does the Suffering of the Palestinians Feed the Israel/Palestine Conflict?

6. EXCERPTS FROM THE 2006 COURSE-INSERT SYLLABUS

The purpose of the excerpts from the 2006 course-insert syllabus is to demonstrate how the course-insert was organized and to show the 10 Rules of Online and Videoconferencing Etiquette.

**Professor Lawrence Woods, The American University of Sharjah, UAE, www.aus.ac.ae
Professor Mark Clark, The Oregon Institute of Technology, USA, www.oit.edu**

WEEK 1, April 3-9, 2006

In addition to the Getting to Know You Forum in the Week 1 Forum, there are three threads for dialogue on the ES Website to choose from:

THREAD 1: Unit 1 – What do you think about media coverage of Israel/Palestine?

THREAD 2: What is the most important characteristic of your culture you want your partner school to know?

THREAD 3: Unit 2 – Do you think Israelis and Palestinians both have legitimate claims to the land of Israel/Palestine? Why or why not?

Monday, April 3 - Wednesday, April 5

After reading and agreeing to follow ES Online Etiquette rules, students register and post profile.

Monday, April 3, Clark and Woods

Pretest, Review of Syllabus, PowerPoint Unit 1: Project Introduction

Wednesday, April 5, Clark / Saturday, April 8, Woods

PowerPoint Unit 2: What are the Claims to Israel/Palestine?

DVD: Divided Minds

WEEK 2, April 10 – 16, 2006

In addition to the Getting to Know You Forum, there are three Week 2 Threads to choose from:

THREAD 1: Unit 3 – Why did Israel become a state and Palestine did not become a state?

THREAD 2: What do you think are similarities and differences between students in the two partner schools?

THREAD 3: Unit 4 – How does the history of persecution of the Jews and the Holocaust feed the Israel/Palestine conflict?

Monday, April 10, Clark and Woods

Videoconference 1 – About Unit 2: Claims to Israel Palestine (8:00 am OIT, 7:00 pm AUS)

PowerPoint Unit 3: After the British Mandate and the 1947 UN Partition Plan, why did Israel become a state while Palestine did not?

Wednesday, April 12, Clark / Saturday, April 15, Woods

PowerPoint Unit 4: How does the suffering of the Jews feed the conflict?

WEEK 3, April 17 – 23

In addition to the Getting to Know You Forum, there are three Week 3 Threads to choose from:

THREAD 1: UNIT 5 – How does Palestinian suffering during the 2nd Intifada through today feed the cycle of violence?

THREAD 2: Is there a difference between Israeli state violence and Palestine terrorism?

THREAD 3: UNIT 6 – How do you think the Palestinian refugee problem should be settled? How do you think the Arab-Jewish refugee problem should be settled?

Monday, April 17, Clark and Woods

PowerPoint Unit 5: How does the suffering of the Palestinians feed the conflict?

Wednesday, April 19, Clark / Saturday, April 22, Woods

PowerPoint Unit 6: How do the Israeli and Palestinian histories from 1947-1955 differ regarding the creation of refugees? (Palestinian refugees from the State of Israel and Arab-Jewish refugees from Arab countries.)

WEEK 4, April 24-30

In addition to the Getting to Know You Forum, there are three Week 4 Threads to choose from:

THREAD 1: UNIT 7 – How do you think the issue of Jerusalem should be resolved in future negotiations?

THREAD 2: Why do humans spend billions of dollars making war instead of making peace? How could this change?

THREAD 3: UNIT 8 – What are the best solutions outlined in Unit 8? What is possible under Hamas and Kadima?

Monday, April 24, Clark and Woods

Videoconference 2 – About Unit 6: Palestinian and Jewish-Arab Refugees- 8:00 am OIT, 7:00 pm AUS)

Unit 7: Why did the peace process fail?

DVD: West Bank Story

Wednesday, April 26, Clark / Saturday, April 29, Woods

PowerPoint Unit 8: Possible Solutions

DVD: The Arc

Monday, May 1, Clark and Woods

STUDENT POSTTEST AND EVALUATION

Ten ES Rules of Online and Videoconferencing Etiquette

ES recognizes that freedom of speech, as granted in the 1st Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, must be accepted in order for the roots of the current problems between Israel and Palestine to be examined. In the US, illegal speech is generally confined to hate speech and direct threats of violence against individuals (i.e. the U.S. President), groups, or classes of people. ES wishes to make a distinction between threats of violence and the expression of unpopular ideas. Guided by ES policy, the ES monitor will identify postings of illegal speech and contact the individuals posting such illegal speech, working to uncover the underlying ideas and reframe them for civil dialogue on the ES Website. Should a student make a second illegal posting, that student will not be allowed to continue to dialogue.

Each student and professor, when they register on the ES Website, is automatically consenting to follow the ES rules of Online Etiquette. Since misunderstandings can easily occur both over the Internet and between cultures, we are requiring that you follow the Ten Rules of ES Online Etiquette. **Remember, we find comfort in those who agree with us, but we learn from those who disagree with us.**

- 1. You are free to agree or disagree, but keep the discussion respectful.**
2. Remember you are responsible for what you write. In the U.S., slander, defamation, and hate speech are illegal. If you speak this way, the moderator will help you rephrase your words so that another can hear and understand your point. The second illegal posting will result in expulsion from the dialogue.
3. When writing your messages, avoid “me too” and “I agree.” Instead, explain why you agree or disagree.
- 4. Be sure to read the comments of other students before posting. Not reading fellow students’ messages is considered the same as ignoring your classmates. Listening to and understanding other points of view are important to mutual understanding.**
5. Stick to the topic of current discussion.
6. When posting your messages, be sure to proofread your comments.
7. Keep comments clear and concise so people will read your ideas.
8. Try to avoid sarcasm and too much humor as they are easily misunderstood both online and across cultures.
- 9. Be forgiving of others and remember they may be new to intercultural online discussions.**
10. Do not attach spam or junk mail to your messages.

7. OPTION TO CUSTOMIZE CURRICULUM

ES is currently developing a number of pilot projects in which a pair of professors proposes a topic and shares their curriculum content. Some of these topics will be discussed in pilot dialogues for the Religion and Culture Project “Why Religions Leave the Middle Path.”

Current projects under development include the following:

1. The perspectives of St. Thomas Aquinas and Al Ghazali
2. A comparison of the American political action committees: the Arab CAIR and the Jewish APAC.
3. The role of nonviolence in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict
4. Medieval Christianity and Islam: The Golden Age of Spain
5. Advancing women’s roles in Jewish and Islamic worship