

 <p>THE CENTER FOR JUSTICE & PEACEBUILDING</p> <p>A PROGRAM OF EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY</p>	<p>ORGANIZATIONAL OMBUDS: RESTORATIVE PRACTICES FOR CONFLICT COMPETENCE PAX 691</p> <p>SPI 2026 8-12 June</p> <p><i>Course meeting location and time: TBA</i></p>
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INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Wayne Francis Marriott, M.A. Certified Organisational Ombuds

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Available virtually by appointment. Please note the instructor resides in New Zealand.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This graduate-level course introduces students to the evolving role of the **Organisational Ombuds** as a strategic resource for fostering ethical culture, psychological safety, and constructive conflict engagement within institutions. Drawing on interdisciplinary frameworks from peace-building, conflict management, organisational behavior, and restorative justice, students will explore how Ombuds offices operate as **confidential, informal, independent, and impartial** spaces for navigating conflict and disputes and surfacing systemic concerns.

This course is ideal for graduate students in fields such as **conflict resolution, peacebuilding, public administration, psychology, and business** who are interested in careers that involve **mediation, organisational leadership, transforming engagement into peaceful organisations, or human resources**. It prepares students to contribute to the design and implementation of Ombuds programs and to become advocates for restorative and inclusive approaches to conflict in complex systems.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

This immersive 5-day program examines the contemporary and future landscape of organizational ombuds practice. Drawing on *The Organizational Ombuds: Foundations, Fundamentals & Its Future*, the course integrates technology, data analytics, training models, research development, and future-focused organizational dynamics to equip participants with advanced strategies for modern ombuds work.

Through a combination of theory, case analysis, and experiential learning, students will explore:

- Multi-party meetings and group work: Examine the principles and practices of restorative processes in organisational settings.
- Organisational culture: Develop skills in conflict analysis, facilitation, and systemic issue identification.
- Standards of Practice: Explore the ethical practice dimensions of informal dispute resolution.
- Conflict Coaching: Understand the Ombuds' role in enabling people to create, apply and maintain conflict competence.

- Return on investment. Critically assess the impact of Ombuds programs on organisational health and governance.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND OTHER RESOURCES:

Required materials and texts for the course will include:

- Burton, S. L., & Keashly, L. (Eds.). (2025). *The organizational Ombuds: Foundations, fundamentals, and its future*. International Ombuds Association. ISBN 979-8-2-18-62962-5

Additional texts for the course pending

REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS:

Final Deliverable Capstone

“Future-Ready Ombuds Office Development Plan” (10–15 pages)

Students integrate learning from all five days to design an ombuds office capable of serving the next decade’s organizational realities. Students will construct for a new Ombuds office, a draft Charter Agreement that codifies the service values, a budget forecast for year one, year two, and year three of operation, and a reporting rubric that blends key performance indicators and outcome evaluation for the organisation.

These are brief descriptions of required graded assignments for the course. More details for each assignment can be found on the “Guidance Notes” that will be provided in class.

DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE:

Daily class schedule pending.

SPI ATTENDANCE POLICY:

It is expected that individuals registering for an SPI session will attend the entire course (barring unforeseen travel delays or emergencies). Please contact SPI directly at spi@emu.edu before registering if you know you will have to miss any days of a course. SPI certificates are provided to participants only if they miss no more than one class day unless prior arrangements have been made with the SPI team and confirmed with the instructor. **For-credit participants are expected to attend all class sessions unless they are given permission from the instructor to miss a session.** SPI courses rely on active student participation in a learning community. If a participant misses class repeatedly and this disrupts the learning for others, they will be asked to leave the course and no money will be refunded for remaining course time.

GRADING CRITERIA AND OTHER POLICIES:

SPI provides all students taking the course for graduate credit some supplemental information that will serve as a resource after SPI when students are working on course assignments. This includes information on library resources, EMU’s academic integrity policy, and guidelines for writing graduate papers, information regarding the grading scale and course deadlines, and then some suggestions we have for you in order to make your experience of taking SPI courses for graduate credit as successful as possible! These [documents](#) are all available online.