



Spark M. Matsunaga Institute  
for Peace and Conflict Resolution  
University of Hawai'i at Manoa  
[www.peaceinstitute.hawaii.edu](http://www.peaceinstitute.hawaii.edu)

## **Capstone Paper Guidelines**

A **Type-One Capstone Paper** should reflect on the Student Learning Outcomes for the Graduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution (which are summarized in this paragraph) and the ways in which the student has attained these learning outcomes through the curriculum. In particular, the Capstone Paper should review the courses taken and the extent to which the student has gained an understanding of: (a) the dynamics of different types of conflicts and the range of dispute resolution alternatives; (b) the methods for assisting parties to analyze their conflict or problem and to choose an appropriate problem-solving process; (c) the methods for working with parties to design culturally appropriate problem-solving processes that are attentive to the parties' substantive, relational, and procedural interests; (d) the methods for assisting parties to identify and articulate their interests, to hear and be heard, to clarify options, and to understand the implications of the choices they are making; and (e) the methods for assisting parties to evaluate the degree to which the processes in which they have engaged were efficient, fair, effective, culturally appropriate, and set a good precedent. The Capstone Paper should also analyze at least one ethical issue that can arise in conflict resolution. The suggested length of the paper is 5,000-6,000 words and it will be supervised and assessed by the student's advisor in the Graduate Certificate program.

A **Type-Two Capstone Paper** is a traditional research paper on a topic related to Conflict Resolution, which must be approved by the paper supervisor. The student **may not** write on a topic that s/he has already researched for another course (unless s/he obtains permission and can demonstrate that the Capstone Paper will represent significant new research and writing). The paper supervisor will normally be the student's advisor in the Graduate Certificate program. However, the student may seek permission to work under supervision of another instructor in the Graduate Certificate program if the other instructor is willing to supervise the student on a topic within the instructor's area of expertise. The suggested length of the paper is 5,000-7,000 words, including footnotes. (We allow an additional 1000 words in the suggested word limit because this type of Capstone Paper will necessarily have more footnotes than a Type-One Capstone Paper.)

## **Assessment and Suggested Schedule for Completion**

The Capstone Paper will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. The final version of the paper should be submitted to the paper supervisor for assessment no later than two weeks **before** the end of the semester in which the student hopes to graduate.

In order to ensure steady progress on the Capstone Paper, it is useful to submit the following preliminary documents to the paper supervisor for review and comments:

1. Week two of the semester: A one-paragraph description of the proposed paper topic (for the supervisor's approval);
2. Week five of the semester: A working bibliography (if you are writing a Type Two Capstone Paper). This is a list of sources that you have either read or plan to read as part of the research process. This will enable the paper supervisor to advise you on the quality of your sources and whether you need to widen the scope of research.
3. Week eight of the semester: A detailed outline of the Capstone Paper (which will enable the paper supervisor to give you suggestions on the organization and coverage of the paper).
4. Final month of the semester: You are encouraged to submit a high-quality draft of your paper if you wish to receive comments from your supervisor. The draft should be as good as you can make the paper so please proofread the paper before submitting it for comments.