



Negotiating on the Frontlines	
Credits	2 credits ECTS
Dates	28 April - 9 May 2025
Format	<p>Online (combination of self-study time and live sessions). Live sessions are mandatory and take place 2-3 times a week, usually in early afternoon CET.</p> <p><i>Online course requires 20-25 hours of dedicated work per week. We recommend that participants allow at least 50% of their time for the course and adapt their professional activity accordingly.</i></p>
Language	English
Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full price: CHF 1'700• Partner rate (UNICEF, MSF, ICRC): CHF 1'360 (20% discount)• Special Rate for Government and NGO/CBO Staff: CHF 850. Available exclusively to staff from local and national NGOs, CBOs, and government employees in low/middle-income countries. Proof of local employment and salary required.
Coordinator	Claude Bruderlein - claudio.bruderlein@frontline-associates.org

ESC 2023-2024 - Course at a glance

Course overview

Short description

"Negotiation on the Frontlines" is an experiential course designed to equip participants with essential negotiation skills and tools needed to navigate complex and adversarial environments. Participants will gain a robust understanding of crisis management approaches, strategic frameworks for high-stake dialogues, and tactical tools for the planning of effective negotiation in complex environments. The course is structured over two weeks, combining theoretical presentations, practical exercises and simulations based on real-world scenarios such as public health crises, protection challenges, irregular migration and climate-induced disasters. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to engage in group work with experienced practitioners to apply and reflect on their learning, culminating in a final reflection paper. The course aims to enhance participants' abilities to build trust, manage adversarial relationships, and lead constructive engagements in high-intensity situations.

Objectives of the course

At the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. **Analyse Complex Environments:** Develop your ability to critically analyse political and social environments during public health and other humanitarian crises, identifying key stakeholders, their positions, interests, and the broader context influencing the negotiation process.
2. **Strategic Planning and Facilitation:** Design and implement a robust plan for professional dialogues on high-stake, contentious issues, incorporating strategic vision and tactical approaches to achieve constructive outcomes.
3. **Negotiation Frameworks:** Understand and apply various conceptual frameworks for complex negotiations, including transactional, relational, and adversarial models, tailored to specific contexts and relationships.
4. **Interpersonal Skills and Tension Management:** Enhance interpersonal skills to navigate challenging relationships, employing contemporary tools and methods to manage tensions, de-escalate conflicts, and perform effectively under pressure.

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5. **Practical Application and Reflection:** Leverage insights from seasoned practitioners through experiential learning, simulations, and group work, enabling students to confidently engage in face-to-face negotiations with difficult counterparts and reflect on their personal development and capabilities.

Workload

Around 20-25 hours of work each week, including:

1. Asynchronous self-study activities (such as case studies, videos, recorded slideshows, readings, etc.)
2. Group activities and dialogue with experienced practitioners
3. Synchronous live sessions and simulations

Thematic structure of the course

The course is divided in 10 modules over two weeks:

1. Engaging with Difficult Counterparts
2. Negotiation Models in Policy Environments
3. Context Analysis and Search for Common Shared Space
4. Stakeholder mapping and influence exercises
5. Value Proposition and Scenario Development
6. Building trust and fostering legitimacy
7. De-escalation techniques in adversarial relationships
8. Mandate Design
9. Risk management exercises
10. Enhancing Negotiation Success

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Prerequisites

Audience

- Professionals in the humanitarian, development or social sector looking to develop their competencies in negotiation, as well as reflect and capitalize on their experience as negotiators
- Professionals from other sectors (political analysts, decision-makers, government officials, donor agencies) who wish to increase their understanding of negotiation in humanitarian settings
- Graduate students with relevant volunteer or intern experience (2-3 years), looking to undertake a postgraduate course with a view to entering the humanitarian sector

Distance Learning

- Broadband/high speed connection - 2.5 Mbps minimum.
- Please note that a PC/laptop/tablet is preferred to access most weekly content and activities
- Microphone and webcam

Admission requirements

1. a university qualification (Bachelor's degree or equivalent)
2. at least three years of relevant professional experience
3. excellent command of English
4. motivation working in the humanitarian sector