GROUNDSWELL

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Serving Orange County since 1991

40-Hour Basic Mediation Training
Spring 2026 Syllabus

Course Description

This 40-hour Basic Mediation Training, delivered in accordance with the California Dispute Resolution Programs Act, will feature a combination of both synchronous and asynchronous learning.

Synchronous Sessions: Live Zoom sessions where everyone logs in at the same time.
Asynchronous Work: Prework to be completed on Google Classroom.

This two-week intensive course requires participants to complete about 16 hours of asynchronous work. Failure to complete all of the asynchronous work will result in the participant not receiving a certificate of completion.

Participants are required to present during all of the live Zoom sessions with their cameras on and a working microphone. Failure to attend all of the Zoom sessions will result in the participant not receiving a certificate of completion. Zoom links for the live sessions and a link to the Google Classroom will be sent to participants about one week before the first Zoom session.

Please review the schedule on this syllabus to ensure you have adequate availability for the time commitment this training requires. If you cannot fully commit to this training, we encourage you to review our website for future dates this training will be offered.

Participants who complete all the asynchronous assignments and participate in all the Zoom sessions will receive a certificate of completion. This training exceeds the requirements of the Dispute Resolution Programs Act (DRPA). Successful completion qualifies the new mediator to participate in DRPA mediation programs across California.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this training, participants will…

- Determine the history, policies, and procedures of California's Dispute Resolution Programs Act
- Analyze the characteristics related to their own and others' conflict styles, positions, and interests
- Prepare and carry out all stages of the mediation process, including opening statements, identifying issues, creating an agenda, negotiating, problem-solving techniques, and writing agreements
- Decrease intense emotions during a conflict or mediation session
- Paraphrase, clarify, question, and incorporate the interests of parties in mediation
- Display neutrality and impartiality as a third-party participant in conflicts

Schedule	
Friday 4/17 – Monday 4/27	***Self-Paced Work on Google Classroom*** • 16 hours of self-paced learning divided into multiple sections which include videos, readings, and questions
Tuesday 4/21	***<u>Optional</u> Orientation on Zoom from 12pm-1pm*** • How to Navigate Google Classroom
Tuesday 4/28	**Live Session on Zoom from 6pm-9pm (PST)** • Introductions, Stage One, Practice Intake, Practice Opening Statement
Thursday 4/30	**Live Session on Zoom from 6pm-9pm (PST)** • Conflict Styles, Stage Two, Reflective Listening, Layers of Listening, Laundering Language Activity
Saturday 5/2	**Live Session on Zoom from 9am-4pm (PST)** • Stage Three, Clarify and Define, Art of Asking Questions, Positions v Interests, Bias in Mediation, Emotions in Mediation, Roleplay Review
Tuesday 5/5	**Live Session on Zoom from 6pm-9pm (PST)** • Stage Four, Transitions, Impasse, BATNA/WATNA, Power Imbalances, Giving Solutions
Thursday 5/7	**Live Session on Zoom from 6pm-9pm (PST)** • Two Roleplays
Saturday 5/9	**Live Session on Zoom from 9am-4pm (PST)** • Stage 5, SMART Agreements, Writing Stipulations, Two Roleplays, Takeaways

Lead Instructor

Marco Antonio Ortega (he/él) is the Director of the Dispute Resolution Program at Groundswell. He is an active practitioner of facilitative mediation, restorative justice, and transformative justice with a particular interest in community mediation and local peacebuilding. He has helped people navigate situations of harm and conflict in schools, courts, organizations, and communities in both Spanish and English. Marco also works with the National Association for Community Mediation where he mentors and coaches executive directors at community mediation centers throughout the United States. Additionally, he serves as a board member with Community Legal Aid SoCal. He has a Master of Arts in Negotiation, Conflict Resolution, and Peacebuilding from California State University, Dominguez Hills and a Master of Advanced Study in Criminology, Law and Society from the University of California, Irvine.

Email marco@wearegroundswell.org with any questions.