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The Program in Water Conflict Management and Transformation

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The Program in Water Conflict Management and Transformation

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The Professional/Graduate Certificate in Water Conflict Management and Transformation

Current approaches to water resources education and research do not adequately address the subtle challenges to water resources management inherent in conflict management. We, at Oregon State University (OSU), propose the Professional/Graduate Certificate Program in Water Conflict Management and Transformation to fill this niche as a broader, more integrative approach that integrates human and policy dimensions of water resources within the framework of scientific and technological solutions. This 18-credit certificate provides in-depth skills-building training to enhance personal and institutional capacity in water governance issues. It is designed as a professional, stand-alone certificate or as a graduate minor. It will be taught on OSU campus, but an online program will be developed for online candidates. The curriculum centers around case-based, interactive course and fieldwork to provide an in-depth look at water conflict, conflict transformation, and prevention issues and strategies across four distinct and overlapping themes: Water Governance, Water and Ecosystems, Water and Society, and Water and Economics. Each theme incorporates several topics critical to understanding water conflicts. A highlight of the certificate program is a capstone course entitled, "Water Governance and Conflict Management." This is coupled with an intersession practicum working with watershed councils, landowners, and agencies; and a guided and critiqued project in which two teams take on, for example, the roles of Jordan and Israel to negotiate a treaty for water resource allocation in a simulated water negotiation. These techniques hone student skills, understanding and thought development. Students will also take part in fieldwork in a watershed or basin at risk of, or in, water conflict. Upon successful completion of the certificate program, students will be able to:

- Improve their listening skills through practice and critiquing;
- Increase their understanding of the culture and environment from multiple perspectives and scales (both geographic and temporal) on water conflict issues;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the complexity of the water resource systems and how they interact with water uses;
- Uncover and assess conflicting water use interests in the framework of policy objectives and constraints;
- Analyze the significance of institutional frameworks for water resources at multiple scales; and
- Successfully work and communicate in a multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural environment.