

Fall 2014

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
BACM-30500 / MW 11:00 - 12:15**

*The Eugene D. Fanning Center for Business Communication
Mendoza College of Business
University of Notre Dame*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Sandra Collins

Office: 234C Mendoza College of Business

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The Director of the Eugene D. Fanning Center for Business Communication is Prof. James S. O'Rourke. The Center is located in 234 Mendoza College of Business. Telephone: 631-8397. Fax: 631-5255. E-mail: jorourke@nd.edu.

The Administrative Assistant for the Fanning Center is Judy Bradford, room 234 Mendoza, 631-4827.

TEXTS

Collins, Sandra D. *Managing Conflict and Workplace Relationships*, Mason, OH: Thomson-South Western, 2010.

Furlong, Gary. *The Conflict Resolution Toolbox*, Mississauga, Ontario: John Wiley & Sons. 2005.

Stone, D., B. Patton, and S. Heen. 2010. *Difficult Conversations*. New York: Viking.

Articles, cases, and role plays distributed in class and posted online.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

- Describe the difference between constructive and destructive conflict.
- Analyze conflicts using a communication systems approach that recognizes the various elements that contribute to conflict.

- Design ways of influencing the elements of conflict systems to manage or resolve conflict.
- Recognize his or her style of dealing with conflict and most significant challenges to effectiveness when faced with conflict, and identify ways to improve conflict outcomes.
- Plan a simple mediation.
- Discuss the ethics of various strategies for “winning” in conflict.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation (15%). Participation is more than just attendance. This class will involve case discussion and in class exercises. Attendance and preparation for class are expected. Ability and willingness to contribute to class discussions and exercises will be evaluated. Some exercises will require written preparation or documentation that will be collected for credit.

Exams (50%). There will be two exams. The exams will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions.

Homework Journal (15%). Journal questions are posted on Concourse. You should respond in writing to the questions and turn in your responses for credit. Some journal questions encourage you to reflect on your own approach to conflict and how well it serves you in different situations. Other journal questions ask you apply something you’ve learned in class to a conflict. Most questions will require a one to two page response. The format for the journal is typed, single spaced, single or double-sided. The journal is worth 15 points.

Video Case Group Analysis (20%). Students in small groups will be required to analyze a conflict from a case which will be presented in a video viewed in class and write up their analysis. You’ll be asked to apply what you’ve learned in class to your analysis. The case is worth 25 points.

GRADE WEIGHTS

Exams (2 @ 25 points)	50%
Journal	15%
Participation	15%
Case Analysis	<u>20%</u>
	100%

GRADING PHILOSOPHY

Your grade for any particular assignment in this course is a reflection of your professor's judgment of the quality of your work. We can only grade on the basis of what you give us, not on what you had sincerely intended to do. Submit your work on time, follow the assignment directions, do your own work, and you'll have little trouble achieving the course objectives.

Grades will not be distributed on a curve. You are attempting to meet our standards of quality work. Those standards have been developed over a period of more than 30 years, dealing with business, government, industry, the press and the public. We are asking you to do what your employers will ask of you: prompt, competent, effective work.

Once a grade has been assigned and recorded, it cannot and will not be changed unless evidence is provided that your professor has made an error. A difference of opinion between you and your professor about the quality of your work is not evidence of error.

COURSE POLICIES AND STANDARDS

Please seek help as soon and as often as you need. Do not wait until it is too late for us to help you. We are here to assist you with the task of learning and improving your communication skills.

Deadlines. There are no automatic extensions, make-ups, or incompletes. **Late work will be accepted; however, you will be graded down.** If you cannot meet your responsibilities in the course, see or call your instructor in advance of deadlines. We know that, from time-to-time, everything from a job interview to illness may keep you from attending class. Please let your instructor know *in advance* and he or she will make every effort to accommodate your needs.

Absence. We regard your presence as especially important, even if your instructor does not formally take roll at the beginning of each class. We have found, over the years, a remarkable correlation: those who come to class faithfully seem to do better in the course.

Incompletes. As a rule, we just do not award incompletes. They're genuinely a pain in the neck. You begin the new term with the obligations of the previous semester hanging over your head. Both instructor and student feel harried and unhappy about the situation. In unusual cases, though, such as hospitalization or genuine emergency, an incomplete will be assigned. The student must complete all class assignments within one semester or the Registrar will assign a grade of "F" unless an extension is approved by both the instructor and the Dean, and we notify the Registrar.

Appeals. Your first course of appeal for any grade, assignment requirement, due date or other course-related decision is your instructor. If you either do not understand or cannot accept your instructor's decision, you may appeal in writing to the course director. Subsequent appeals may be directed to the Associate Dean for MBA Programs and, from there, to the Dean of the

College. Keep in mind that most administrators will be reluctant to overrule routine, course-related decisions of their faculty.

Last Day to Drop or Add Class. Because this is a 1.5 credit hour class that runs for only half the semester, the drop and add dates are different from other, full semester classes. The add date for this class is August 26th and the last day to drop this class is September 16th.

The Notre Dame Honor Code. Much of the educational process in the Mendoza College of Business involves group discussion and collaborative activities. Neither the College nor the Fanning Center for Business Communication wish to hinder the learning that can and often does take place in that environment. Fairness, however, requires that certain limits be observed in the actual production of assignments. No student should copy another student's work or represent work done by someone else as if it were his or her own. Evidence of plagiarism is cause for serious disciplinary action by the College. Please, do your own work.

Schedule of Classes

(This is a tentative schedule. Any changes will be announced in class.)

Tuesday	Thursday
<p>August 24</p> <p>Introduction to course.</p>	<p>26</p> <p>The nature of conflict. Read: Collins, Chapter 1 Read: Chapter 2 and <i>Deerfield</i> case in Appendix 1 of Collins. Due: Homework 1</p>
<p>31</p> <p>Circle of Conflict and Triangle of Satisfaction Models</p> <p>Read: <i>Toolbox</i>, Chapters 1-5 and <i>Offsite Team</i> Case on Concourse Due: Homework 2 Theories of Conflict</p>	<p>September 2</p>
<p>7</p> <p>The Boundary Model Power and Trust</p> <p>Read: <i>Toolbox</i>, Chapter 6, and the <i>SmartArt</i> case on Concourse.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Interest Rights and Power Model The Dynamics of Trust Model Power and Trust</p> <p>Read: <i>Toolbox</i>, Chapters 7 & 8</p>
<p>14</p> <p>Exam 1</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Dimensions of Conflict Model Social Style Model</p> <p>Read: <i>Toolbox</i>, Chapters 9 & 10, <i>Star Jerk</i> case on Concourse.</p>
<p>21</p> <p>Confronting Others Read: <i>Difficult Conversations</i>, pages 1-128,</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Communication Alternatives Perspective Taking Read: <i>Difficult Conversations</i>, 131-234</p>

28 Negotiation Basics Read: Negotiation article on Concourse, Negotiation exercise	30 Video for Case Analysis
October 5 Mediation Read: Mediation article on Concourse, Mediation exercise Due: Case Analysis	7 Exam 2

Managing Conflict Homework Journal Questions:

Responses should be typed, single-spaced (double-spacing between paragraphs is fine), and 1-2 pages. (5 points each)

1.

Theories of conflict can assist us in our analysis of conflict by encouraging us to consider factors involved in a conflict that we might otherwise overlook. For this question, discuss the theories presented in your book as they apply to the Deerfield case. What does each theory encourage us to consider in our analysis of this case? Would the theories help guide your action if you were to take the role of Diane Jackson and attempt to resolve this conflict?

2.

Apply the Circle of Conflict Model and the Triangle of Satisfaction model to an analysis of the Managing an Offsite Team case. How well do the models help you understand the conflict? Are there important aspects to the conflict that the models do not focus on? What course of action do the models suggest Craig should take to deal with this conflict? Is there something important Craig should do that is not suggested by an analysis using the models?

3.

Analyze a conflict that you are having or have recently had using the Difficult Conversations framework. Write about the three conversations and how they played out in your conflict. Is there anything more to the conflict that the Difficult Conversations framework doesn't encompass? Analyze the conflict using the Parties/Messages/Context analysis of the communication systems approach. Are you able to include all important elements of the conflict with this framework? Can the two frameworks be used together?

