

COM 312: Communication, Conflict, & Negotiation

SLN #12818

Spring 2016

Tues/Thur 1:30 – 2:45 PM

LL 275

3 Credit Hours

****Syllabus subject to change****

Instructor: Ms. Bailey Oliver

Email: Bailey.M.Oliver@asu.edu

Office: STAUF 308

Office Hours:

T - from 9:15 to 10:15 AM

W - from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Course Objectives

This course was carefully designed to help you:

1. Increase your ability to take others' perspectives
2. Understand the role of goals in conflict
3. Develop a greater awareness of the role of power in conflicts
4. Be able to identify the influence of emotions in your conflicts
5. Expand your understanding and use of a range of conflict strategies
6. Be able to manage your conflicts more effectively

Course Description

This course examines the nature of interpersonal conflict, how it occurs, and how to manage it. This is very much an *applied* communication class: it combines lecture, some discussion, and some activities to focus on how you can translate communication research into knowledge and skills that will influence the quality of your relationships now and in the future. This course introduces students to the basic principles of effective communication and conflict interaction. In order for this course to be of value to you and your classmates, you need to read the assigned readings, regularly attend lectures, and participate actively in the course.

Course Rationale

Conflict is a natural and common part of our everyday lives. Conflict is often inevitable and is encountered when we interact with other people, whether it is our family, relational partners, coworkers, bosses, clients, or even strangers. By understanding the various ways of managing interpersonal conflict, we can help promote understanding and civil communication in our relationships.

Required Texts

- Cahn, D.D., & Abigail, R.A. (2014). *Managing conflict through communication* (5th Edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.
 - ISBN: 978-0205862139
- Required Supplemental Readings (will be available on Blackboard)

Blackboard/myASU/ASU Email

A required part of this course is accessing announcements, updates, and grades through Blackboard at <http://myasucourses.asu.edu>. The blackboard website provides vital announcements, a discussion board, and course calendar—information that may not be discussed in lecture. Because it is more up-to-date, website information supersedes lecture information, so check it before each class. You should access the COM 312 website within the first week of class.

In order to get key course announcements, you **MUST** regularly access your ASU-sponsored email address. If you want to use an alternate email, you must redirect your ASU email address. Furthermore, students must regularly clean out their email accounts so that they are able to receive course announcements.

Exams and Assignments

Grades will be calculated based on the following assignments. There are 400 total possible points for this course with the following grade breakdown:

Discussion Board Posts & Responses:	(5 at 20 points each)	100 points
Exams:	(3 at 50 points each)	150 points
Conflict Analysis Paper:		100 points
Attendance/Participation:		50 points
Total:		/400 points

Discussion Board Posts & Responses: 5 at 20 points each: 100 points total.

You will engage in five discussion boards, intermittently displaced throughout the semester. (See the calendar at the end of this document for specific due dates). Both your original post and your 2 peer responses will be due by Friday (no later than 11:59 PM), but feel free to complete them up to a week before they are due. You will receive up to 10 points for your original post and then 5 points each for responding to 2 peer posts.

Typically, the discussion question (DQ) will require that you respond to a concept, claim, or issue discussed in the readings or lectures. Your responses should include references (at least one) to the textbook or article readings we have covered thus far in the course. A few DQs may expect you to engage in an activity or experience **before** you post your response to the discussion board. For example, you may be asked to watch a short film, take an assessment to reveal your conflict style, or read an article and provide a response. **Some of these DQs will require that you engage in the activity/experience during the week prior to the date of your post.** These DQs will be disclosed early on, but it is important that you read all DQs a week ahead so that you have time to complete the assigned activity before the posted due dates. All DQs will be posted exactly one week before their due date.

- **Guidelines for Original Discussion Posts**

- Your discussion posts should be clear, and free from spelling and grammar mistakes. It is highly suggested that you write your posts in a Word document **FIRST**, and then copy them into the DB. This allows you to appropriately proofread.
- Original posts should be a minimum of 250 words.
- Each original post should include at least one reference. Your citation will most likely be from the textbook or from assigned readings posted on Blackboard. You must use APA citations and

include the full reference at the end of your original post. Feel free to use outside references as well.

- Do NOT attach your response as a document. Write it directly in the field provided.
- Posts should be submitted on time, or they will not be graded.

- **Guidelines for Peer Responses**

- Be sure to respond to 2 peer posts. You must respond to their original post and not to a *comment* on an original post. Responding to comments on your own post is encouraged but does NOT count towards your 2 responses.
- Peer posts should be a minimum of 150 words.
- Your responses should be intelligent and thoughtful. You **MUST ADD SOMETHING TO THE DISCUSSION**. You will not receive points if you merely repeat what is said in the original post.
- Do NOT attach your response as a document. Write it directly in the field provided.
- Please use tact: be respectful to each other in the discussion board. Remember that we are all entitled to our opinions. This is not a platform for rhetoric, personal attacks, being on a soapbox, or condemning another person's perspective.
- You should avoid replying to posts that have already been commented upon until every post receives at least one comment.
- There are NO citation/reference requirements for peer responses, although recommended.

Exams:

3 exams at 50 points each: 150 points total.

Exams are based on chapter content, lecture, and other class materials. Generally, exams are constructed with multiple choice questions and short essays or brief applications. Study guides will be provided, but be warned they are more of an outline of topics instead of answered questions. *No exams will be accumulative.*

Conflict Analysis Paper:

100 points.

You have two options for this assignment (see below). Papers should be a minimum of 5 pages in length, NOT including references, figures, charts, etc. APA style is expected: 1 inch margins all around, 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, in-text citations, and a full reference page.

- **Option A: Movie Analysis.** This assignment requires that you select a movie or television show (at least 60 minutes in length) that depicts conflict (in the workplace, in a relationship, family conflict, etc.). Your paper will analyze how characters dealt with conflict, responded to conflict, and/or their use of negotiation or mediation. A minimum of 5 references will be required, beyond the course material. More information on this option will be distributed in class.
- **Option B: Research Review.** This assignment requires that you select a context of conflict (e.g., parent-child, friendship, organizations, etc.) or a specific type of Alternative Dispute Resolution (e.g., mediation, arbitration, etc.) and review the most relevant literature that has been most recently published. A minimum of 5 references will be required, beyond the course material. You should *synthesize* the literature in order to make valid conclusions regarding your context or ADR technique of choice.

Further instructions on this assignment will be provided closer to the due date (see calendar).

Participation/Attendance:

50 points.

Class activities will be a central component of this class, as they are useful for understanding and applying concepts in conflict and negotiation. As such, there is always the possibility of in-class activities and/or quizzes throughout the semester worth points towards your overall attendance/participation grade. This grade (50 points

possible) is determined based upon your attendance and participation in in-class activities/discussions and pop quizzes. Missing more than 4 days (excused or unexcused) will also result in the deduction of points from this grade. *Attending* class does not guarantee you are *participating* in class.

Grading Policy

Generally, in the course, ‘excellent’ work earns “A” grades, ‘good’ work earns “B” grades, ‘average’ work earns “C” grades, ‘below average’ work earns “D” grades, and ‘unacceptable’ work earns an “F” or “0” grade. [More specific guidelines as to what counts as ‘excellent’ and ‘good’ will be explicated in class or presented to you on a handout before each assignment.]

Due to course policy, I cannot offer extra credit.

A+	388-400 points	B+	347-359 points	C+	308-319 points
A	375-387 points	B	334-346 points	C	280-307 points
A-	360-374 points	B-	320-333 points	D	240-279 points
				E	0-239 points

Course Policies

Participation:

We will be engaging in a number of in-class activities for which participation is REQUIRED. Your participation in this class includes every assignment from in-class discussions, to online discussion boards, and in class activities. Your participation grade will reflect each of these areas. Students who are not present or who are tardy for those activities will not receive credit for the activities.

Attendance:

Every student is allowed a total of 4 absences -excused or unexcused. Excessive absences (4+) will negatively affect your overall Attendance/Participation grade. An excused absence (note from physician, attorney, police, judge, religious holidays, official schedules for university sponsored events, an obituary/funeral program, etc.) **DOES NOT negate the absence** and **will only be necessary** if the student has missed an assignment due date. **Tardies of 15 minutes or more will count as an (1) absence.**

For an absence to be excused you will need to provide the instructor with appropriate documentation. If you are going to miss class for religious holidays or university-sponsored events, please notify me at least two weeks in advance so that appropriate accommodations can be made. Students who have some prior conflict with a due date have the responsibility of discussing the conflict and making alternative arrangements **in advance** with their instructor. Again, excuses are only necessary if you missed an assignment due date.

Makeup Polices:

Written work must be turned in using **Safe Assignment** (within our Blackboard section) before class on the day due or it will not be graded. Please note: papers are due at the beginning of class, no exceptions. All written assignments must be typed in double-spaced 12 pt. font with 1-inch margins all the way around, your name in the header, and page numbers on every page. **All written assignments must be submitted twice: to Safe Assign and in hardcopy form, printed and stapled to turn in to the professor.**

Papers will **not** be accepted late for full credit. Assignments may be turned in at the following class for half credit (50% less credit) at most. Papers will not be accepted after two class periods from the original due date. **I do not accept papers via email**, so please do not ask. All papers must be typed and include a name and date for grading.

Academic Integrity:

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication strongly believe in academic integrity; thus, instructors in the College and School do not tolerate cheating and plagiarism. Instructors who find compelling evidence of academic dishonesty will actively pursue one or more of the following actions: assigning a grade of XE ("failure through academic dishonesty") to the student, advocating the suspension or expulsion of the student from the College, and/or referring the student to Student Judicial Affairs. If a student who is charged with academic dishonesty is found to be in violation, then one or more of these disciplinary actions will be taken. For further information, please read the Student Academic Integrity policy and the code of conduct for the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at: <http://hdshe.asu.edu/acadintpol.html>.

STUDENT CONDUCT: I want to build a classroom climate that is comfortable for all. In a communication class, it is *especially* important that we (1) display respect for all members of the classroom – including the instructor and students, (2) pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities; (3) avoid unnecessary disruption during class time (e.g., having private conversations, reading the newspaper, surfing the internet, doing work for other classes, making/receiving cell phone calls, text messaging, etc.); and (4) avoid racist, sexist, homophobic or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom. This is *not* an exhaustive list of behaviors; rather, it represent examples of the types of things that can have a dramatic impact on the class environment. Your final grade may be reduced by 1% *each time* you engage in these sorts of behaviors. Further, students who are verbally or physically aggressive towards the instructor, the TAs, or another student before, during, or after class will have their grade lowered by 25% *each time* they engage in this sort of behavior (and, students engaging in such behaviors will be permanently removed from the class and the proper authorities notified).

Students are required to adhere to the behavior standards listed in the Arizona Board of Regents Policy Manual Chapter V – Campus and Student Affairs: Code of Conduct (http://www.abor.asu.edu/1_the_Regents/policymanual/chap5/index.html), and the ACD 125: Computer, Internet, and Electronics Communications (<http://asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd125.html>).

Students are entitled to receive instruction free from interference by other members of the class. An instructor may withdraw a student from a course when the student's behavior disrupts the educational process under USI 201-10 (<http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/usi/usi201-10.html>). As noted in this document, "An instructor may withdraw a student from a course with a mark of "W" or "E" when the student's behavior disrupts the educational process. Disruptive classroom behavior for this purpose is defined by the instructor." In cases where disruptive behavior does not warrant removal from class, at the instructor's discretion a student's final grade will be lowered by 25% instead.

Disability Resource Center:

If you are registered with the disability resource center, please notify me and have them contact me so that I may make accommodations as needed. This paperwork is required at the start of the semester and not after the fact. Please get me DRC requirements as soon as you can.

Class Rules

- All students will be professional and considerate of others and act in an appropriate and mature manner.

- Emails will be composed using proper language and grammar, and will include a proper greeting. **Failure to do so will result in the deletion of the email without a response.**
- Emails sent after 5 PM may not be responded to until after 8 AM the following morning.
- No tobacco use will be tolerated during class times and cigarette breaks will not be permitted.
- The use of cell phones, laptops, iPads, and other electronic devices are prohibited unless you are DRC approved. *Each time* a student is caught using such device, a point will be deducted from the next upcoming assignment.
- Questions about grading will be asked during office hours, not through email or during class time.

Tentative Course Calendar

Please note, the assigned chapters must be read BEFORE the corresponding class meeting.

Date	Topic(s)	Readings	Assignments
Tuesday, Jan 12	Overview of Course; Introductions		
Thursday, Jan 14	Introduction to Conflict	Chp. 1	
Tuesday, Jan 19			
Thursday, Jan 21	Comm Options in Conflict	Chp. 2	
Tuesday, Jan 26			
Thursday, Jan 28	Managing Conflict Theoretically	Chp 3.	
Tuesday, Feb 2			
Thursday, Feb 4	Responding to Conflict	Chp 4.	DB #1 Due by Friday, Feb. 5th at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, Feb 9			
Thursday, Feb 11	Review, SG provided		
Tuesday, Feb 16			Exam 1: Chapters 1 - 4
Thursday, Feb 18	Managing Violent Tendencies	Chp. 5	
Tuesday, Feb 23			
Thursday, Feb 25	Managing the Conflict Climate	Chp. 6	DB #2 Due by Friday, Feb. 26th at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, March 1	Managing Face	Chp. 7	
Thursday, March 3			
Tuesday, March 8			Spring Break - NO CLASS
Thursday, March 10			Spring Break - NO CLASS
Tuesday, March 15	Managing Stress & Anger	Chp. 8	
Thursday, March 17	Review, SG provided		
Tuesday, March 22			Exam 2: Chapters 5 - 8
Thursday, March 24	Negotiation APA/Paper Information Understanding Journal Articles	Chp. 10	DB #3 Due by Friday, March 25th at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, March 29			
Thursday, March 31	Mediation	Chp. 11	
Tuesday, April 5			
Thursday, April 7			NO CLASS

			DB #4 Due by Friday, April 8th at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, April 12	Managing Conflict in the Workplace	Chp. 12	
Thursday, April 14			
Tuesday, April 19	Managing Social Conflict	Chp. 13	Conflict Analysis Paper Due
Thursday, April 21	Forgiveness	Chp. 9	DB #5 Due by Friday, April 22nd at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, April 26	Documentary <i>Happy</i>		
Thursday, April 28	Review- SG provided		
FINAL DATE Thursday, May 5th from 12:10 to 2:00 PM			Exam 3: Chapters 9 - 13