



ACOM 3323: Conflict Management

ACOM 3323-991 65335

ACOM 3323-9U1 65336

Fall 2018 - Online

3 Credit Hours

Syllabus subject to change

Instructor: Dr. Bailey M. Oliver

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Office: Speech Bldg., Room 230

Business Hours Contact: (501) 683-7264

Weekends Contact: via email

Available Hours for Virtual or On-Campus Office Hours:

Via In-person, Skype, Facetime, or Phone - Please email to confirm medium and time

T - from 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Th - from 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

And by appointment (email to set up an alternative time)

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

Catalog Course Description

Development of the student's ability to manage conflict in organizations, groups, and personal relationships effectively. Topics include theories, styles, patterns, and systems of conflict as well as conflict management techniques of negotiation and mediation. The course uses in-class activities to understand the factors and dynamics of conflict resolution better and to develop effective conflict management skills that include forgiveness and reconciliation.

Course Rationale

This course was carefully designed alongside and in conjunction with the goal of the Department of Applied Communication to "foster the co-creation of better social worlds through positive communication". 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. Overall, this course examines the nature of interpersonal conflict, how it occurs, and how to manage it. This is 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, watch all course lectures, and participate actively in the course's online discussion boards.

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/UALR Email

As an online course, it should be of no shock that a required part of this course is accessing announcements, updates, lectures, assignments, and grades through Blackboard. The Blackboard website provides vital announcements, a discussion board, and course calendar—information that may not be discussed in emails. You should check our Blackboard page frequently. You should access the ACOM 3323 Blackboard website within the first two days of the start of the class.

In order to get key course announcements, you also **MUST** regularly access your UALR-sponsored email address. If you want to use an alternate email, you must redirect your UALR 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
Participation Journals:	(2 at 25 points each)	50 points
Conflict Analysis Paper:		100 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 peer response 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 15 points for your original post and then 5 points for responding to a peer.

Typically, the discussion question (DQ) will require that you respond to a concept, claim, or issue discussed in the readings or lectures. Your original post 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 at least one peer's post. 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 response.
- Peer posts should be a minimum of 150 words.
- Your response 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 encouraged.

Exams:

3 exams at 50 points each: 150 points total.

Exams are based on chapter content, lectures, 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. All exams will be administered online, but questions will have time restrictions. ***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. This paper will be submitted via Blackboard and checked with anti-plagiarism software known as "Safe Assign".

- **Option A: Movie Analysis.** This assignment requires that you select a movie or television show (at least 40 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 (academic journal articles), 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 (academic journal articles), 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 and an instructional video on the paper assignment will be provided closer to the due date (see calendar) and posted online.

Participation Journals:

2 at 25 points each: 50 points total.

Since this course is online, you will not have the opportunity to engage in in-class activities central to learning course concepts. In place of this face-to-face participation, you will complete two journals where you will be asked to engage in an activity and then apply course concepts to the activity. You will submit two of these, one for Politeness Theory in Chapter 7 and another for Negotiation in Chapter 10. These are informal journals and should not exceed more than 1 page of 12-point, Times New Roman, double-spaced text. Further instructions for these journals will be provided in a handout and instructional video posted online.

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 lectures or presented to you on a handout before each assignment.]

Due to course policy, I cannot offer extra credit.

A –	90-100	Percent	360-400	Points
B –	80-89	Percent	320-359	Points
C –	70-79	Percent	209-238	Points
D –	60-69	Percent	280-319	Points
F –	0-59	Percent	0-239	Points

Course Policies

Participation and Attendance:

Although attendance is not evaluated in an online course, participation is expected in all discussion boards and across course assignments. Please also note Blackboard allows instructors to see when you have last logged in. Participation and preparedness are expected. All assignments are due by the date on the syllabus/schedule, and by 11:59 PM Central Time. Waiting until just before the deadline to complete or submit a graded assignment carries the risk of missing that deadline due to unforeseen problems. Missing the deadline for completion of an exam, journal, paper, or discussion posting is never acceptable. Deadlines are absolute. Extensions are not granted in this online course. Please be advised that missed discussion posts will receive a zero.

Also, you should be very careful and fully prepared when you take the exams. You should study and review course materials before accessing an exam. You should use a reliable Internet source. If you should lose connectivity while taking an exam, immediately log back in as the timer continues to count down when you are offline.

Makeup Policies:

If you do miss an assignment due date, you must have an excused absence to make up the assignment. An excused absence includes a note from a physician, attorney, police, judge, religious holiday, official schedule for university-sponsored events, or an obituary/funeral program. For an absence to be excused, you will need to provide the instructor with appropriate documentation. If you are going to miss an assignment 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.

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

Regular and Substantive Contact:

I am dedicated to interacting with my students to ensure their academic success. As such, I will remain in regular and substantive contact with you all throughout the semester by: sending weekly emails, commenting on discussion board posts, and providing online feedback and grades within two weeks of an assignment submission. I will also be available for virtual or in-person office hours and via email throughout the semester.

Academic Integrity:

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is the deliberate use of another's work as your own. This means lifting passages from books, journal articles, or other scholarly material without proper citations. I read these types of articles regularly and recognize the type of writing. Please also be advised that all work for this class must be **original** to this class. You may not recycle papers or work from other courses you've taken, including if you are taking this course over again. This behavior is considered to be academically dishonest and/or plagiarism as well. If you have any questions about these policies, please contact me. All material in this course- exam answers, discussion board comments and posts, and paper submissions will be reviewed for plagiarism.

Student Conduct:

I want to build a classroom climate (even an online climate) that is comfortable for all. In a communication class, it is *especially* important that we (1) display respect for all members of the class – including the instructor and students, (2) pay attention to and participate in all class activities; and (3) 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 represents 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 (via Discussion Boards or submitted assignments). Further, students who enact these behaviors towards other students or towards the instructor before, during, or after

the course dates 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). A breach of any of these student conduct expectations may also result in being sent to an academic disciplinary dean.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with Disabilities: Your success in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create inclusive learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have a documented disability (or need to have a disability documented), and need an accommodation, please contact me privately as soon as possible, so that we can discuss with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) how to meet your specific needs and the requirements of the course. The DRC offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process among you, your instructor(s), and the DRC. Thus, if you have a disability, please contact me and/or the DRC, at 501.569.3143 (V/TTY) or 501.683.7629 (VP). For more information, please visit the [DRC website](#).

Inclement Weather:

During inclement weather, UA Little Rock will make a decision whether or not to close based on all available information. The chancellor will decide whether or not conditions warrant canceling classes and activities and closing the campus or whether classes and activities will be canceled but with specified campus offices open. **Online or web-enhanced classes will continue as scheduled at the discretion of the faculty member.** The [UA Little Rock website](#), UA Little Rock email, the university's main telephone number (501.569.3000), and the Rave campus alert notification system are the official means of communicating information concerning weather-related closings. When necessary, the university will announce a separate decision about canceling night classes (those classes starting at 4:20 p.m. or later) by 2 p.m., if possible. The Policy Advisory Council of the University Assembly will recommend to the chancellor if and when missed undergraduate and graduate class days should be made up. In the event that the university is closed during a final examination day, the provost, in consultation with the Faculty Senate president, will reschedule any missed graduate or undergraduate final examinations with the exception of online exams which will continue as scheduled. Weather and road conditions vary from place to place. Employees and students are expected to exercise good judgment regarding the safety of travel when road conditions are affected by the weather.

Class Rules

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

Tentative Course Calendar

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

Date	Recorded Lecture Topic(s)	Readings	Assignments
Tuesday, Aug 21	Syllabus & Class Overview		
Thursday, Aug 23	Introduction to Conflict	Chp 1	
Friday, Aug 24			Intro (DB #1) Due by Friday, Aug 24th at 11:59 PM Optional Extra Credit Syllabus Quiz Due by Friday, Aug 24th at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, Aug 28		Chp 1	
Thursday, Aug 30	Comm Options in Conflict	Chp 2	
Tuesday, Sept 4		Chp 2	
Thursday, Sept 6	Managing Conflict Theoretically	Chp 3	
Tuesday, Sept 11		Chp 3	
Thursday, Sept 13	Responding to Conflict	Chp 4	
Friday, Sept 14			DB #2 Due by Friday, Sept 14th at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, Sept 18		Chp 4	
Wednesday, Sept 19			Exam #1 available starting Wednesday, Sept 19 th at 8 AM
Thursday, Sept 20	<i>Review Exam Materials</i>		
Friday, Sept 21			Exam 1: Chapters 1-4 Due by Friday, Sept 21st at 11:59 PM.
Tuesday, Sept 25	Managing Violent Tendencies	Chp 5	
Thursday, Sept 27	Managing the Conflict Climate	Chp 6	
Tuesday, Oct 2		Chp 6	
Thursday, Oct 4	Managing Face	Chp 7	
Tuesday, Oct 9		Chp 7	

Wednesday, Oct 10			Online Journal #1 Due by Wednesday, Oct 10th at 11:59 PM
Thursday, Oct 11	Managing Stress & Anger	Chp 8	
Friday, Oct 12			DB #3 Due by Friday, Oct 12th at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, Oct 16		Chp 8	
Wednesday, Oct 17			Exam #2 available starting Wednesday, Oct 17 th at 8 AM
Thursday, Oct 18	<i>Review Exam Materials</i>		
Friday, Oct 19			Exam 2: Chapters 5-8 Due by Friday, Oct 19th at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, Oct 23	Understanding Journal Articles, APA Format, Paper information		
Thursday, Oct 25	Negotiation	Chp 10	
Tuesday, Oct 30		Chp 10	
Thursday, Nov 1	Mediation	Chp 11	
Friday, Nov 2			Online Journal #2 Due by Friday, Nov 2nd at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, Nov 6		Chp 11	
Thursday, Nov 8*	NO LECTURE- Professor at NCA Convention		
Friday, Nov 9			DB #4 Due by Friday, Nov 9th at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, Nov 13	Managing Conflict in the Workplace	Chp 12	
Thursday, Nov 15		Chp 12	
Friday, Nov 16			DB #5 Due by Friday, Nov 16th at 11:59 PM
Tuesday, Nov 20*	NO LECTURE – Fall Break		
Thursday, Nov 22*	NO LECTURE – Fall Break		
Tuesday, Nov 27	Managing Social Conflict	Chp 13	Conflict Analysis Paper Due by Tuesday, Nov 27th at 11:59 PM

Thursday, Nov 29	Forgiveness	Chp 9	
Tuesday, Dec 4	<i>Review Exam Materials</i>		Exam #3 available starting Tuesday, Dec 4 th at 8 AM
Thursday, Dec 6			Exam 3: Chapters 9-13 Due by Thursday, Dec 6th at 11:59 PM