

Cleveland State University
Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs

University Partnership University Center – Lorain County Community College

Course Syllabus: Conflict Management UST/USA/PSM 433

Professor: Dorinda Smith
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Class Time: Tuesdays 6:00 PM, University Center LCCC
Office: LCCC – PS 106
Office Hours: Vary. Please call or make an appointment.



This syllabus does not serve as a contract with the student. It is provided as an overview of requirements and expectations. Due to the nature of this course design, adjustments in scheduling may be required. Any revisions or updates in assignments due or scheduling will be announced in class. Students should keep up with those each and every class session.

Texts:

- 1) **Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In**, Fisher and Ury, Penguin Publishers, ISBN 0-14-015735-2
- 2) **Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most**, Stone, Patton, and Heen, Penguin Publishers, ISBN 0-14-028852-X

Other supplemental materials may be provided in class and/or made available through WebCT course website

The Course:

This course is designed to provide multiple opportunities for students to experience conflict and to be able to discuss conflict as an ever-present component of any decision-making environment, including planning and public administration. It offers tools for: understanding the nature of conflict and of individual and joint decision-making processes; devising individual and group strategies that minimize the destructive consequences of conflict; and identifying solutions satisfactory to those involved in the situations.

Course Methods: This course will be taught in a seminar format and will include assigned readings, lectures, guest presentations, discussions and group exercises. The assigned readings must be read before each class meeting because there are likely to be related interactive experiential learning scenarios for application of solutions to problems encountered. This course is intended to be highly interactive with the professor playing a facilitative role and a supportive role.

Earning Grades



Attendance, preparation and class participation

This course is designed to be highly interactive and experiential. Participation in class discussions, in-class projects and utilization of resources provided in class (audio/visual aids/activities) is considered extremely important elements of this course, and will be used in evaluating points for completion of the course.

Students should expect attendance and participation during class to be high priorities in this course. Application of various methods, techniques and concepts of conflict resolution will be experienced during class sessions. Students cannot be successful in this course without regular, timely attendance and appropriate preparation before each class session, along with active participation during class sessions. Students who are scheduled to present projects of any kind will lose points if he/she is not present and/or not ready to present. If a student does not complete assignments, points are lost for the assignment and points are lost for participation.

Participation = up to 160 points (points are distributed throughout semester and may be accumulated through regular, active participation)

Conflict Management in Action

Each student will identify four real-life conflict scenarios to study and resolve on paper. Each scenario must be complex and not easily resolved. Each case should have alternative solutions stated at the conclusion of the study. Cases should be approximately one-two pages. The cases to focus on may be drawn from real situations in a family, work situation, friendship or other venue. This project will be discussed in detail in class. Students will type and present each study in a neat, attractive manner (error-free grammatically, etc.) on paper and each should be stapled separately. All four should be placed in a two-pocket folder. Student's name should be on the folder and on each case. This assignment is to be completed and submitted to the professor on the due date.

Conflict Management in Action

Case Study/scenarios = up to 60 points (15 per case)

String -Book Project

Each student will conduct research via newspapers and periodicals to identify eight examples of conflict reported/reviewed. Copies of each of the eight articles or clippings should be attached to paper, along with an accompanying typewritten analysis of each article (similar to a scrap book). The point of this assignment is for students to identify conflict in the larger community/world and analyze how it evolves and how it is resolved (or not). Two or three paragraph reflections should not include review of the focus of the articles, but should focus on the students' point of view about the topic. Students should also make suggestions for possible solutions or alternative strategies that may produce resolution. This project will be

discussed in detail in class. Students should begin collecting articles during the second week of class and they should conclude this project the tenth week.

Completed articles and reflections should be placed in a 2-pocket folder with the name of the student on the folder and on each article page/reflection. Projects presented in any other type of fashion will not be graded and will result in no points being assigned for this assignment. Students should be ready to discuss the progress of their string-books throughout the ten weeks when called upon in class. Students will discuss their final string-book project in class.

String - Book Project = up to 60 points

Journal

Each student will purchase a blue book (at a college bookstore) and keep weekly notes on the course, experiential activities, conflict encountered, etc. The journal assignment is also designed to provide students with a venue for reflection on issues related to conflict. Each journal entry should not exceed approximately one page. Entries in the journal will be made weekly for the first twelve weeks of the semester and then submitted to the professor with a final summary reflection about doing the journal assignment. Entries should be dated and they should be recorded neatly so that the professor can read them.

Journal Project = up to 60 points

You Decide Project ONE

Each student will select (and seek approval) to make a presentation on something that focuses on and informs the class about conflict/conflict management. The presentation may include a role play case study scenario, video/DVD clips, book review, training activity or some other project that will inform/involve multiple students. Each student will facilitate his/her You Decide Project.

Students will sign a roster to indicate the name/type of You Decide Project intended and they will sign up for dates to conduct the presentation. Each student must have a different focus related to conflict. A one page summary reflection of the presentation/plan is due the class after the presentation is made.

You Decide Project ONE = up to 30 points

You Decide Project TWO - Independent Field Study – Each student must pick a different topic (first to sign up gets it!)

Each student will identify an interesting topic involving conflict, *in the news*, to investigate. This may be accomplished by attending a public meeting where controversy takes place; or by watching a news broadcast television program, for example: (MSNBC: Hardball with Chris Matthews; FOX: O'Reilly Factor: Bill O'Reilly; MSMBC: Meet the Press; Tim Russert, -- or a political debate where an issue is at the forefront or a union meeting, school board, city council, dispute over zoning, eminent domain, other.). Collect information about the topic and then present/discuss what you learned in class. A one page summary reflection is due when the presentation is made.

You Decide Project TWO = up to 30 points

***All projects and assignments required in this course must be completed satisfactorily to pass the course. Assignments not completed will result in the reduction of those points and the related participation points.

Grade Point Distribution

Point Conversion to Grades - Performance Levels Indicated

A	=	400 - 379	Superior performance
A-	=	378 - 357	Very good performance
B+	=	356 - 335	Good performance
B	=	334 - 313	Well above Average
B-	=	312 - 291	Above average
C+	=	290 - 269	High end average
C	=	268 - 247	Average
C-	=	246 - 225	Below average
D+	=	224 - 203	Far below average
D	=	202 - 181	Poor
D-	=	180 - 159	Very poor
F	=	158 and below =	Failure to pass

Tentative Schedule – Subject to Change

When you see this: *Special Note/Reminder**

Readings: Getting to Yes = G to Y and Difficult Conversations = DC



Dates 2007	Basic Information	Readings
8/28	First Class – Course overview, introductions, syllabus review, requirements described, etc.	G to Y: Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2
9/4	String book focus Paragraph due <i>Journal</i>	G to Y: Chapters 3 and 4
9/11	Movie night – settle in with your popcorn and movie study guide <i>Journal</i>	G to Y: Chapters 5 and 6
9/18***	You Decide Project <i>idea one due</i> Movie Reflection due <i>Journal</i>	G to Y Chapters 7 – finish the book
9/25***	You Decide Project <i>idea/plan two due</i> <i>Journal</i>	DC: Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2
10/2***	You Decide Project One presented in class tonight <i>Journal</i>	DC: Chapters 3 and 4
10/9	Conflict topics <i>Journal</i>	DC: Chapters 5 and 6

10/16*** <i>Tentative date</i> Field Study tonight = no class meeting	Class will not meet tonight. You Decide Project Two- Independent field study – this is your evening to accomplish the assignment <i>Journal</i>	DC: Chapters 7 and 8
10/23***	Conflict topics <i>Journal</i>	DC: Chapters 9 and 10
10/30	<i>Conflict Management in Action due Journal</i>	DC: Chapters 11 and 12
11/6***	You Decide Project Two presented in class tonight <i>Journal</i>	
11/13***	<i>String book due</i> – discussion in class <i>Journal</i>	
11/20	Conflict Topics <i>Journal</i>	
11/27***	<i>Journals due</i> - discussion	
12/4	Last class	
Finals Week	Meetings with professor this week	



Other information that may be helpful to you:

University Policies: Refer to the CSU Bulletin or website for policies and procedures for add/drop and withdrawal and for other information.

Students with Special Needs should inform the professor of any concerns or special accommodations. CSU policies should be followed.

NO VISITORS ALLOWED without advance permission of professor. No children anytime!

Other Considerations: CELL PHONES, BEEPERS (ringing/or making noise of any kind), ETC., MUST BE TURNED OFF DURING CLASS. IF YOU ANTICIPATE AN EMERGENCY CALL, PLEASE TELL THE PROFESSOR IN ADVANCE. TAPE RECORDERS ARE NOT PERMITTED to protect class member's freedom of speech.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any written assignments. Do not copy or use the ideas of another person without citing appropriately, using APA standards. Students violating this policy should expect consequences in point/grade assignment and possible disciplinary action by the University. *Don't do it!*

If you encounter difficulties in this course, you should contact the professor to discuss your situation. The success of each student is important to me!