Course Title:
Conflict Resolution in Human Relations

Course Number:
HR 5343-220

Course Description:
You’ve heard it before…conflict is a natural part of human interaction. It’s true! Yet most people view conflicts as undesirable, difficult, scary, to be avoided…and some actually seem to thrive on conflict and keeping things “stirred up”. Therefore, conflicts are often contentious, counterproductive, time wasting encounters that derail progress toward goals and damage relationships. On the other hand, conflict interactions have the potential to serve as catalysts for cooperative, innovative problem solving, and positive forces for change. What accounts for this difference? Can we turn contentious conflicts into functional, productive experiences that may result in mutual learning, understanding, healthier relationships, and positive, more enduring outcomes? How can we change the ways in which we deal with conflict? Why does it matter?

Conflict resolution is about much more than a set of tactics or procedures. The ways in which we perceive it, feel about it, and behave toward it are interdependent dimensions that are critical to understand if we are to make sense of conflict experiences, and they are things we can change. Functional conflict resolution has the potential to affect individuals, groups, communities, and nations in the following ways:

- By reducing the level and severity of conflict
- By fostering a deeper understanding of ourselves and a greater appreciation for others
- By creating conditions that support meaningful dialogue, improve the overall quality of interactions, and increase the likelihood of positive and more enduring outcomes
- By supporting individual empowerment, strengthening community, and advancing social justice

Class Dates, Location and Hours:

Dates: September 4-9, 2012
Location: Spangdahlem AB, Germany. Students should check with Site Director for classroom location.
Hours: Tue-Fri 6:00-9:30 p.m.; Sat-Sun 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: August 6, 2012

Site Director:
Allen Cannon. Phone: DSN 452-7555, CIV 06565-61-7555; Fax: Spangdahlem Library 06565-7843; E-mail: apspangdahlem@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:

Course Professor: Richard L. Coberg, Ph.D.
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 6362
Norman, OK 73070
Telephone Number: (405) 360-4353
E-mail Address: drcoberg@aol.com
Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, by appointment.
Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:
Student materials are available at the Follett/AP Bookstore located in the Oklahoma Memorial Union, 900 Asp Ave., Norman, OK. Orders can be placed online at www.oklahomaunion.bkstr.com or by telephone at 866-369-9713 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-5960 (outside the U.S.). E-mail orders may be sent to oklahomaunion@bkstr.com. Representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST on Friday. Summer hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. CST. Faxed orders may be placed 24 hours a day to 866-223-5607 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-7140 (outside the U.S.).

4. Supplemental reading and activity material will be distributed during class.

Note: The Follett/AP Bookstore is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through the Follett/AP Bookstore.

Course Objectives:
By the end of this course, you should be able to demonstrate your understanding of:
- The general nature and dimensions of conflict and resolution
- Common sources and underlying factors that contribute to conflict escalation
- The significance of emotions, values, beliefs, culture, personality, attitudes, biases
- The significance of power in conflict
- Your personal styles of conflict-related behaviors
- The concepts of empowerment, advocacy, and social justice
- The roles of third parties and the “third side” in prevention, containment, and resolution
- Conflict transformation, and the elements of functional communication
- Principles and methods, and dealing with common challenges associated with interest-based negotiation.
- Conflict “aftermath” including the ideas of apology, forgiveness, peacemaking, and reconciliation

Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:
NOTE: Assignments should be typewritten and double spaced. APA style is preferred. Proofread carefully for spelling, grammar, etc. ALSO NOTE: Bring BOTH texts with you to class.

Essay in 3 Parts:
Read and study all three texts. In one paper of 12 - 15 pages (plus references), address the following:

Part 1: Mayer-
1. Discuss Mayer’s view that understanding the dynamics of conflict is essential to resolution.
2. Explain what is meant by the idea that effective communication is more about intent than technique. Give one example from your own professional or personal life.
3. What are “identity needs” and why is it important that we understand them?
4. Why is self-reflection essential to our ability to engage effectively with others?
5. What principle(s) or concept(s) did you find most salient in this book? Explain.
Part 2: Ury-

1. Explain what is meant by the “third side” and give 1 or 2 examples from your own life.
2. How has the knowledge revolution shifted the focus from the idea of resources as a “fixed pie” to an “expanded pie”?
3. The functions of the third side are to prevent, resolve, or contain conflict. Identify and discuss one role that a third-sider might play in each function.

Part 3: Fisher, Ury, and Patton-

1. Study “Part II” (The Method) and explain each of the 5 points in your own words.
2. Study “Part III” (Yes, But…). What 2 or 3 ideas did you find that you might be able to use in a work or personal situation in your own life? Describe briefly.

Due: Sept. 4 Value: 35 points

Personal Journal:

For a period of 1 – 2 weeks, keep a log of interactions that happen at work, home, and other places you may be. Some will involve other people (interpersonal), and some may be within yourself (intrapersonal). Pay particular attention to your emotions and the way you handle each event. Jot these things down (the log can be informal and handwritten if you prefer, and length will vary). At the end of the time period, take a reflective look back over the entire log. Do you see any patterns? What impressions have you formed? In a reflective paper of about 1 typed, double spaced page, describe your thoughts about the ways in which you tend to handle things.

Due: Sept. 9 Value: 15 points

Attendance, class participation:

This course is an interactive experience comprised of discussion, self-examination, video, practice scenarios and other activities. It is expected that you will arrive at each class session on time and prepared to participate. Points may be deducted for evidence of lack of participation, unexcused absences, or inappropriate behavior. See “Attendance/Grade Policy Notice” below.

Value: 35 points.

Final Project:

Select some aspect of conflict that is of particular interest to you. Using the course materials and other scholarly and/or professional resources, develop a paper of about 6 – 8 typed, double spaced pages that is informative and addresses your topic in some depth. Due via email no later than 10 days after course completion. Value: 15 points

Grading:

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, or F

NOTICE: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy.

Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Honesty

Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities and … [you] have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty. Academic misconduct in any form is inimical to the purposes and functions of the University and is therefore unacceptable and is rigorously proscribed. Academic misconduct includes:

- cheating (using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement;
- assisting others in any such act; or attempting to engage in such acts.

All acts of academic misconduct will be reported and adjudicated as prescribed by the student code of the University of Oklahoma. All students should review the “Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity” found at http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity

Accommodation Statement

The College of Continuing Education [Advanced Programs] is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your OU Site Director.

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

Copyright

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA

Richard L. Coberg, Ph.D.

Education

1982 Ph.D. in Lifelong Learning, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma

Current Positions

Director, Educational Alternatives, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

- HR 5003 Theoretical Foundations of Human Relations
- HR 5013 Current Problems in Human Relations
- HR 5083 Seminar in Group Dynamics
- HR 5093 Introduction to Graduate Studies in Human Relations
- HR 5113 Grant Writing & Development
- HR 5113 Women & Men in Organizations

Representative Publications and Presentations


Representative Honors and Awards Received

- Oklahoma Safe-Kids Seatbelt Award, 1993
- National Commission Against Drunk Driving 1990 Distinguished Service Award in Prevention
- Advertising Council Award of Merit 1988, Oklahoma Challenge Video
- Outstanding Staff Member 1983, University of Oklahoma Student Association
- Award of Excellence, Managerial Staff Council, University of Oklahoma, 1982

Major Professional Affiliations

- Oklahoma College Personnel Association
- Oklahoma Adult Education Association
- Oklahoma Community Education Association
- Toastmasters International
- Alpha Phi Sigma, National Criminal Justice Honor Society