

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT  
COMMUNICATION 3333.W1  
FALL 2018**

**INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Fendrich R. Clark, Ph.D.

Office: FINE ARTS—RM. 208A

Email: [frclark@se.edu](mailto:frclark@se.edu)

Office Phone: (580) 745-2556

Office Hours: M 2-4 pm, T 1-3 pm, W 9-10 am and 1-3 pm, R 1-3 pm & also by appointment

**COURSE TITLE:**

COMM 3333.W1 – Conflict Management

**CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION:**

*Conflict Management* is an examination of conflict as a communication phenomenon. Conflict is something that people create and shape as they interact with each other. Thus, this course focuses on the communication dynamics involved in understanding and managing conflict, no matter what form it takes. Completing this course will give you an understanding of how theory and research can be used to understand and influence conflict dynamics in everyday life.

**PREREQUISITES:**

NONE

**REQUIRED MATERIALS:**

- McCorkle, Suzanne and Melanie J. Reese. Personal Conflict Management: Theory and Practice. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2010. (ISBN #9780205499885)
- Krivis, Jeffrey. Improvational Negotiation: A Mediator's Stories of Conflict about Love, Money, Anger and the Strategies that Resolved Them. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006. (ISBN #9780787980382)

**OPTIONAL MATERIALS:**

- Stanton, Fredrik. Great Negotiations: Agreements that Changed the Modern World. Yardley, PA: Westholme Publishing, 2010.

**TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS/SKILLS:**

Available through the Southeastern Distance Education webpage under Technology or <http://homepages.se.edu/blackboard/student-support/>. You may be responsible for delivering a speech in which you will need to deliver the speech in front of a live audience of five to seven visible in the frame, digitally recording and uploading the speech to YouTube.

**NETIQUETTE (INTERNET ETIQUETTE):**

Available through the Southeastern Distance Education webpage under Technology or <http://homepages.se.edu/online-learning/technology/communication-netiquette/>.

**LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES:**

Available through the Southeastern Distance Education webpage under Student Services or <http://homepages.se.edu/online-learning/student-services/>.

### **OTHER RESOURCES AND LOCATION:**

Additional explanations and interactive websites for content covered in this class are available under “External Links,” located on the left-hand side of the Blackboard menu. The websites are listed by concept and have additional information to enhance your understanding of the material. You are encouraged to visit these websites, especially if you’re having difficulty.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The objective of this course is to study and critically analyze effective communication practices involved in managing conflicts. Ultimately this course seeks:

1. To deepen your interpersonal conflict management understanding and skill,
2. To develop insights into the social dynamics that precipitate and perpetuate organizational conflict and to demonstrate sustainable resolution practices and processes, and
3. To examine how the integrative negotiation process facilitates quality organizational development and conflict management.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE:**

<i>Week #</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
1	Aug 27-Sept 2	<i>Introduction: Welcome to the course! Understanding Conflict</i>	M&R: Chs.1-5	DB1	9/2
2	Sept 2-9	<i>Approaches to Conflict: VECS</i>	Kravis: Chs.1-4	CS1	9/9
3	Sept 10-16	<i>Conflict Management: Skills &amp; Styles</i>	M&R: Chs.6-9	DB2, CS2	9/16
4	Sept 17-23	<i>Conflict Management: Third Party Mediation</i>	M&R: Chs.11-12	DB3, Mid-term	9/23
5	Sept 24-30	<i>Managing Emotions in Negotiations</i>	Kravis: Chs.9-15	CS3	9/30
6	Oct 1-7	<i>Managing Group Conflict: Family &amp; Society</i>	M&R: Chs.13, 15	DB4, CS4	10/7
7	Oct 8-14	<i>Managing Organizational Conflict: Workplace Course Wrap up!</i>	M&R: Ch.14	DB5, Final	10/14

### **SEMESTER CALENDAR:**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>

<i>Aug. 27, 2018</i>	<i>Classes Begin</i>
<i>Aug. 24, 2018</i>	<i>Last day to enroll in or add a class</i>
<i>Aug. 31, 2018</i>	<i>Last day to drop a class with no grade record</i>
<i>Aug. 31, 2018</i>	<i>Last day to drop a class with a refund/no charges</i>
<i>Sept. 3, 2018</i>	<i>Labor Day Holiday</i>
<i>Oct. 2, 2018</i>	<i>Last day to drop a class with an automatic “W”</i>
<i>Nov. 19-25, 2018</i>	<i>Thanksgiving holiday</i>
<i>Dec. 10-14</i>	<i>Final Exams</i>
<i>Dec. 14</i>	<i>Semester Ends</i>

### **COURSE POLICIES:**

1. Attendance. Regular attendance is expected. In accordance with guidelines set by the University (see University Catalogue), the Registrar’s office defines attendance in online and blended classes as:

- **Stopped Attending** = Students who were participating online but have stopped submitting any assignments, etc. without contacting/making arrangements with the instructor.
- **Never Attended** = Students who never accessed Blackboard to view the course or never completed any assignments that were due for the course. Statistics Tracking in Blackboard will be utilized in part for determining teacher candidates’ accessing of Bb.
- **Excessive Absences** = Students who have submitted some work but are infrequent in their participation or late on assignments—leading to a failing grade.

Regular and routine participation is required to be “in attendance” for the course. This includes regularly logging in, turning in homework by required dates/times, **and** participating in discussion forums. Seven (7) consecutive days of non-participation **will** result in your access being disabled without warning. Participation, or lack thereof, may also affect your financial aid. Remember, Blackboard automatically tracks and records every click once you log into a Bb course. Bb administrators can see if and when you logged on, the date and time of day you logged on, and what you accessed once you logged in to the course.

2. Student responsibilities regarding assignments. In addition to complying with *all* assignment guidelines & specifications:

- a. All submitted written assignments must be *typed, 12 pt. font, 1-inch page margins, double-spaced, legibly written, well-organized, and free from spelling and grammatical errors.* If you feel you need help with your writing, you may get assistance from other campus resources, such as the Writing Lab. Reference works available in the Henry G. Bennett Library will also help you edit and polish your writing. Remember that most computer programs have spell-checking

options that will help you find many, **but not all**, spelling and typographical errors. Students should also have a *backup copy* of all submitted work.

- b. Continually refer to the SE Blackboard webpage for this course to be informed on class updates (including assignments, test dates, schedule notifications, etc.). Refer to [www.se.edu](http://www.se.edu) or call 580-745-7272 for updates concerning inclement weather and (campus wide) class cancellations.
  - c. Academic work is expected to be the student's own unless otherwise *clearly* indicated. Plagiarism is defined as "to knowingly take and pass off as one's own ideas, writings, words, or concepts of another." In this course, any type of academic dishonesty or the plagiarizing of speeches, outlines, bibliographies, or assignments will subject the student involved to punitive action ranging from failure of an assignment to failure of the course to possible suspension or dismissal from the University.
  - d. Due dates for all assignments are *firm* and failure to deliver on due date will result in *no credit* for the assignment. Prepare now for the unexpected (e.g., printer breakdowns, bad weather, network downtime, work schedules, hungry dogs). Exceptions exist only with instructor's approval.
  - e. Definition of a week. Each week will begin at 12:00 a.m. Monday and will end at 11:59 p.m. Sunday. This will be the time frame for which students will be expected to work within a given week's folder. All assignments will be due at 11:59 p.m., and the last assignment each week will be due on Sunday. All times will be based on the time zone of the institution: **Central Standard Time**.
  - f. Grading Rubrics. Each assignment will use a grading rubric. The rubrics will be attached digitally to your assignments. You should always review the rubric scores and comments to fully understand the grade received and obtain all feedback provided.
  - g. Instructor Feedback. Students can expect replies to emails within 24 hours. Assignments and discussion boards will be graded within one week of the due date (five business days). Discussions will be graded after the due date for peer responses. Grades are reviewable in Blackboard at any time. The professor reserves the right to make adjustments to the syllabus and/or grading policy as needed in order to meet the instructional needs and goals of the class. Students will be notified of any adjustments to the course schedule.
  - h. Work Ahead Policy. Students may feel free to work ahead in the class to the extent that instructor description and/or feedback for assignments does not inhibit the student from adequately completing future assignments.
3. Student E-Mail Policy. Student e-mail accounts are created within 24 hours of class registration and are an official means of communication with students. Important university-related information will be sent to individual e-mail accounts. Students are responsible for regularly reading e-mail messages. Types of communication include but are not limited to financial aid information, inclement weather closings, e-bills and payment deadlines, registration information, and library notices.
  4. Course Archives. A complete set of all materials distributed in class is available on a dedicated Blackboard site created especially for this class. By accessing this web site, you will be able to obtain

extra copies of the syllabus, the course schedule, all the handouts, and a variety of study aids. Over the course of the semester, the slides (PDF format) for each chapter will be posted to the archive. This lecture material is located in the left-hand column under the Course Content tab. All Course Assignments are located in the left-hand column under the Assignments tab.

5. About Fairness. As might be expected, students are often disappointed when they discover that they will not receive the grades they desire. In these circumstances, aggrieved students will frequently plead for exceptions. More often than not, these appeals will start with a variation on the following sentence: “I know you have a policy, but...”

Many students subscribe to fairness in principle, so long as the principle is not applied to their disadvantage. Great philosophers like John Rawls have written books in which they address the importance of fairness. The intent of this statement is not to add to this discourse, but rather to reiterate the commitment to consistently apply the rules and policies set out on this syllabus.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Course Format. This class will be administered using the Blackboard web site: <https://blackboard.se.edu/webapps/login/>. Once you have logged in, you can select: COMM 3333.W1: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT (FA18) to access your online course materials. You are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email, threaded discussion, assignment submissions and other interactions that take place in the online classroom (see **Communication & Discussion Board Netiquette Rules** by clicking the “START HERE” link under **CONTENT** in the navigation pane). A link to the SE Academic Calendar can be found here: <http://www.se.edu/dept/registrar/calendar/>.
2. Course Content Availability. Courses will be made available to students one week (seven days) in advance of the start date. Availability for general items within the course WILL NOT be withheld; however, if shortened visibility for assignments or exams is applied, a minimum of a *48-hour window of availability* will be provided. The course contains a course menu with eight buttons:
  - a. **Course Home Page** - Here, students may obtain quick information regarding announcements, assignments due, etc.
  - b. **Announcements** - Announcements are used to clarify assignments, make changes in the schedule, provide holistic feedback to the class, etc.
  - c. **Start Here** - This section will contain the syllabus, my contact information, course policies, etc.
  - d. **Course Work** - Here students will find a folder for each week of the course. All the content, assignments, etc. will be placed into the appropriate week's folder. An outline of contents is on the front of the folder. Note. Assignments may be due throughout the week.
    - There are Seven Weekly Folders, located under the Course Work tab, containing all course exercises. You will collaborate with me and each other via the online tools provided by Bb, including discussion boards. All assignments, instructions, and explanations are posted to Bb within the corresponding weekly folder. On the front of the folder is the Introduction. It gives you a summary of the contents of the folder as well as an introduction to the subject matter. Assignments, Quizzes, and Discussion Boards are contained in the sub-folders. The course content will be available from the beginning of the course with due dates listed for each assignment. Please note that early submission of an assignment will not result in the assignment being graded earlier.

- e. **Discussion Boards** – Here students can correspond with each other and also interact with me about topics generated from the course.
  - f. **Student Tools** – Students may access any student tool from this area, including grades. You can also email me or classmates from here.
  - g. **Student Email** - All university announcements and other communication from instructors will be sent to student email. This link gives quick convenient access to student email.
  - h. **Henry G. Bennett Library** - This is a link to the SE online library for convenience.
3. Act of Discovery Statement. The Department of Art, Communication, and Theatre strives to provide enrichment opportunities in all its classes through the Act of Discovery Series. Therefore your instructor may assign additional work that can include, but is not limited to: gallery, lecture, or performance attendance; reading, writing, or presentation assignments; group discussions or journaling exercises. We understand that students have commitments outside of the university, and to that end your instructor will make every effort to give students 30 days’ notice prior to an Act of Discovery Series assignment. Certain equipment and supplies, in specific courses, will be provided by the department as part of the Act of Discovery Program.
  4. Class Organization. This class will be conducted with regard for the spirit of freedom of expression. Therefore, openness to a variety of perspectives and points of view is necessary. It follows that we assume a willingness to listen carefully and to react to one another in a mature and thoughtful manner within a spirit that strives for community and understanding. It is important that you own your own words; that is, you must be willing to take responsibility for what you say and give informed reasoning for your statements. While the principles of free speech and academic freedom allow students and teachers, alike, great latitude, expressions or actions that harass or demean others on the basis of sexual orientation, race, creed, age, gender, national origin, and/or physical capabilities will not be tolerated.
  5. Course Evaluations. All students are asked to complete an anonymous evaluation of this course. A link to the course evaluation will be provided in Blackboard/Announcements during the last week of the course.
  6. Preparation. The accompanying schedule provides specific reading assignments for each week. You are responsible and accountable for all reading assignments, even if the material is not explicitly addressed in my lecture notes. Readings should always be completed before taking quizzes or completing assignments. Please note that the subject matter for this course is extremely complex: it would be difficult, if not impossible, to master any appreciable portion of the text in a single extended sitting.

#### **ASSESSMENT (GRADING SYSTEM):**

1. Case Studies. The purpose of the case studies is for us to learn more about major issues pertaining to conflict and third party mediation.
2. Essay. This exercise asks you to write an essay describing the conflicts you encounter over at least a two-week period. Before writing, you need to keep track of your conflicts for a couple of weeks or more (a “conflict record ledger” is supplied below). You may also include recent conflicts that occurred prior to this assignment if you remember them in detail. When preparing to write this essay, keep in mind our definition of a conflict situation. Some students say they cannot do the paper in this class because they

have no conflicts. This means that they do not understand what a conflict situation truly is. For the purpose of this course, a conflict situation is a situation that consists of two or more competing responses to a single event, differences among individuals, mutual hostility between individuals or groups, or a problem needing resolution. Remember that unexpressed conflicts do exist, they constitute a conflict situation. For example, according to our definition of conflict, a conflict exists any time we would prefer to do something but give in to others and do something else, or we may simply avoid confronting others, which is a type of conflict. So, we actually may have more conflicts than we may think. In your essay address the following topics:

- What do you think of the above definition of interpersonal conflict? (e.g. you may start out with the above definition and explain how well it fits with the conflicts you are presently observing in your life.)
- Would you say that it is inevitable to experience conflict with these individuals? (the individuals you may be thinking about in answering topic “a.”)
- In what ways were the conflicts *productive* (meaning the conflict is kept to the issue and to those involved) and what ways *destructive* (meaning the conflict expanded and escalated to the point where it becomes separated from the initial cause and takes on a life of its own)?
- Conclude with a paragraph on *how satisfied you are* with the way you and the others handled these conflicts and *any problems* you have when attempting to manage your interpersonal conflicts.

### Conflict Records Ledger

*Instructions:* make 10 copies of this record. Over the next two weeks or so, observe your conflicts and fill out a record for each one. After you accumulate 10 or more, you should be ready to write your paper.

#### ***Interpersonal Conflict Record***

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ (AM/PM)

Length of argument (time): \_\_\_\_\_

Topic/Issue of conflict: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How often has this issue come up in the past?

Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Very Often

What actually started/triggered the conflict? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Description of the conflict: verbal argument, physical abuse, silent treatment/stonewalling, changed subject/made light of conflict, etc.:

Emotions you experienced: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did it end? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Intensity of disagreement:  
 Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 High  
 Degree of resolution:  
 Resolved 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Unresolved

3. Discussion Boards. Throughout the course you will be asked to submit and respond to prompts. Access the prompts through Blackboard's Discussion Boards link in the navigation pane. Discussion board posts are an opportunity to complete exercises that help you develop a better understanding of conflict management. Your evaluation focuses on the depth, perceptiveness and accuracy of your answers to each prompt; and the integrity of that answer.
4. Examinations. There will be a midterm examination (*Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>*) and a final examination (*Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>*), used to gauge what you have learned in the course. To match educational objectives and test questions I use Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
5. Your final grade will be determined by the following:

<i>Assignment (Point Value)</i>	<i>Total Points</i>	<i>% of grade</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
<i>Case Studies</i>	400	40	
<i>CS1 (100 pts.)</i>			<i>9/9</i>
<i>CS2 (100 pts.)</i>			<i>9/16</i>
<i>CS3 (100 pts.)</i>			<i>9/30</i>
<i>CS4 (100 pts.)</i>			<i>10/7</i>
<i>Essay</i>	100	10	<i>9/16</i>
<i>Discussion Boards</i>	200	20	
<i>DB1 (40 pts.)</i>			<i>9/2</i>
<i>DB2 (40 pts.)</i>			<i>9/16</i>
<i>DB3 (40 pts.)</i>			<i>9/23</i>
<i>DB4 (40 pts.)</i>			<i>10/7</i>
<i>DB5 (40 pts.)</i>			<i>10/14</i>
<i>Examinations</i>	300	30	
<i>Mid-term (100 pts.)</i>			<i>9/23</i>
<i>Final (200 pts.)</i>			<i>10/14</i>
	<b><i>1000 pts.</i></b>	<b><i>100%</i></b>	

Final grades calculated using the following scale:

94 - 100 = A (i.e., 90% + = A)	= 935—1000pts.
84 - 93 = B (i.e., 80% + = B)	= 835—934
74 - 83 = C (i.e., 70% + = C)	= 735—834
64 - 73 = D (i.e., 60% + = D)	= 635—734

0 - 63 = F (i.e., below 60% = F) = 0—634

## UNIVERSITY AND SCHOOL POLICIES:

1. Academic Integrity. Students will uphold all policies set forth by the University in accordance with the Academic Integrity Policy of SE. Students should familiarize themselves with this policy in the SE Student Code of Conduct, which can be accessed on the Office of Student Life Website or by contacting the office of Academic Affairs. We will handle any issues or problems on a case by case basis, documenting all in writing.
2. Counseling Center. Any student experiencing mental or emotional issues who desires free, confidential, clinical counseling is encouraged to contact the SE Counseling Center at (580) 745-2988 to schedule an appointment during normal working hours Monday-Friday, 8:00AM to 5:00PM. For after-hours mental health emergencies, please call SE Campus Police at (580) 745-2911 or the Mental Health Crisis Hotline at 1- (800) 522-1090.
3. Disability Accommodations. Any student needing special accommodations due to a disability should contact the Office of Compliance and Safety, Administration Building, Suite 311 or call (580) 745-3090 (TDD# 745-2704). It is the responsibility of each student who anticipates or experiences barriers to their academic experience to make an official request for disability related accommodations in a timely manner.
4. Equity and Non-Discrimination Statement. Southeastern Oklahoma State University, in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices, procedures, or programs. This includes, but is not limited to: admissions, employment, financial aid, and educational services. Inquiries regarding non-discrimination and equity policies may be directed to: Michael Davis, Director of Compliance and Safety & Title IX Coordinator, (580) 745-3090, or [mdavis@se.edu](mailto:mdavis@se.edu).