

**COMM 3330: Communication and Conflict Management**

The Ohio State University  
School of Communication

**Instructor:**

Dr. Axel Westerwick  
3045B Derby Hall  
Building 025  
(614) 247-2558  
[westerwick.1@osu.edu](mailto:westerwick.1@osu.edu)

Office hours:

Please see on Carmen/News

**Course Description and Objectives:**

*Communication and Conflict Management* is designed to explore the dynamics of conflict and negotiation in a variety of communication and relational contexts: interpersonal, small group, organizational, and business.

The primary goals of this course are to

- (1) help you understand the relationship between communication and negotiation and conflict.
- (2) provide you with a better understanding of yourself and your reactions to conflict.
- (3) help you build communication and analytical skills necessary to manage your conflicts more effectively.

Objectives to help you reach these goals include understanding the difference between position-based and interest-based negotiation, identifying a variety of distributive and integrative conflict tactics, recognizing the characteristics of productive and destructive conflicts, and expanding your understanding and use of a range of conflict strategies.

**What do I need to do for class?**

Conflict and negotiation skills are best learned via hands-on experiences. There will generally be at least one in-class activity each class period (e.g., role-play,

simulation, questionnaire, etc.). These activities will help illustrate points in the readings and lectures, and enhance further discussion and reflection. Also, the exercises will put you in new and potentially uncomfortable situations so that you will have the opportunity to try out new behaviors and skills in the relatively safe environment of the classroom.

I expect students to be fully committed to all activities and to actively participate. The more you contribute to exercises and class discussions, the better the chance to make it a really good and successful learning experience for all of us.

**Class is:** Tuesday and Thursday  
8:00 to 9:20 a.m.  
Room: Journalism Building 106

### **Readings:**

We use the custom textbook Communication and Conflict Management, McGraw-Hill, ISBN 9781308598512. It contains selected chapters/sections from three books. You can buy the custom book in the University Bookstore or as an e-Book on McGraw-Hill's Web site ([www.mcgrawhillcreate.com/shop](http://www.mcgrawhillcreate.com/shop)). E-books are likely to be less expensive. The ISBN for the eBook is 9781308598505.

The book is required for class.

### **Class Web site via Carmen:**

<http://telr.osu.edu/carmen>

*Please be sure to check Carmen at least twice a week for news, changes,...*

### **Special Accommodations**

Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor and seeking assistance in a timely manner. Any student who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in Room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

## **Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct**

It is imperative that all work you submit be your own. When you use someone else's ideas, you must give proper credit to the original author(s). Please adhere to the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the APA manual of style when citing others' work.

According to the Committee on Academic Misconduct "Academic misconduct is defined as any activity which tends to compromise the academic integrity of the institution, or subvert the educational process,"

(<http://oaa.osu.edu/procedures/1.0.html>). Further, the term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed and is illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). It is the responsibility of the Committee of Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct ([http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource\\_csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp)).

## **Exams**

The information taught before an exam will be tested on this exam. It will be not tested on the following exams again (exams in this class are not cumulative).

Exams will be multiple-choice (please bring a #2 pencil on exam days), based on the material from the readings and class discussions. Make-up exams will only be offered for medical or other similar, legitimate reasons.

Failure to take any exam will result in a zero for the exam.

Late Arrival: I reserve the right to exclude students from the exam if they arrive late. Exclusion will result in a zero for the exam.

## **In-Class Assignments (ICA)**

On most days there will be class activities such as role-play, simulations, and questionnaires to help illustrate points in the lectures and to get a better understanding how you and others behave in conflict and negotiation situations.

Ten of those activities will be graded as In-Class-Assignments and will count toward your final score. Only students who participate in in-class activities can get points for the ICAs. Only 9 of the 10 ICAs are necessary to obtain the chance to score 100% in this class. One of them provides the opportunity of bonus points.

*(Example: You have completed all 10 ICAs successfully = 18 regular points + 2 bonus points; you have completed 9 ICAs successfully = 18 regular points and 0 bonus points.)*

### **Online Assignments**

On 6 days the class will move online. Students are asked to complete online assignments which are based on class discussions, handout, students' notes, and additional scholarly work. The online assignments have to be completed on those assigned days to receive credit. We will not meet on those days but the Professor is available to discuss the assignment and to answer questions. The overall goal is to increase learning flexibility and effectiveness and to adapt the course to the changing environment of higher education.

### **Team Presentations**

At the beginning of the semester, students will be assigned to one of 5 different topics. In teams of four, they are asked to prepare a 15 minute presentation/statement about the topic based on reviewed literature. The presentations will take place throughout the semester (see class schedule). Further instructions will be provided at the beginning of the semester.

Not attending the group presentations given by classmates is strongly frowned upon. Thus, students earn 1 point for each presentation day they attend. To earn the point, they need to be in class when the presentations begin and answer a few questions about the discussed topic after the presentations are over. Those attendance points are regular points which count toward the final grade.

### **Assignment**

You will be asked to work alone or together with other students to write a paper about an assigned topic. The assignment provides the opportunity to apply your new knowledge based on the lectures of the class.

If you are working together with other students, all team members will get the same amount of points so that it is a question of fairness and honesty that everyone contributes actively to create an excellent paper. All papers have to be submitted within the given deadline. Late submissions will be penalized.

Further details about the assignment will be announced in class.

### Evaluation

In-Class Assignments	16% (18 points – 9*2)
Online Assignments	16% (18 points – 6*3)
Team Presentations	7% (8 points)
Presentation Attendance	5% (5 points – 5*1)
Assignment	7% (8 points)
Exams (weighted equally)	49% (54 points – 2*27)
Total	100% (111 points)

### Grade Change Requests

Students are strongly encouraged to check posted points for all assignments and exams regularly on Carmen. The deadline for requesting any score changes (in case of score posting errors) for assignments or exams taken during the semester is the first day of the last week of regular classes, Monday, 04/25/2016. However, any missing points have to be reported 14 days after posting of the score in question. Later requests will not be considered.

### Makeup of missed Assignments

Taking missed assignments late will only be allowed for serious, legitimate reasons (documentation needed like doctor's note). Students are required to inform the instructor before the originally scheduled assignment/exam time. Otherwise, a makeup opportunity cannot be granted.

**Class Schedule and Reading List**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
T	1/12/2016	Introduction and Overview	
R	1/14	Team Presentation Assignment	
T	1/19	The Nature of Conflict	1. The Nature of Conflict, p. 2-34
R	1/21	The Nature of Negotiation	2. The Nature of Negotiation, p. 37-63
T	1/26	Conflict Management Styles	7. Styles and Tactics, p. 193; 9. Selecting a Strategy, p. 254
R	1/28	Conflict Management Styles (cont.)	
T	2/2	Distributive Bargaining Part 1	Strategy and Tactics of Distributive Bargaining, p. 64
R	2/4	Online Assignment 1	
T	2/9	Distributive Bargaining Part 2	
R	2/11	Online Assignment 2	
T	2/16	Conflict Management at Work Team Presentation 1	
R	2/18	Integrative Negotiation	4. Strategy and Tactics of Integrative Negotiation, p. 96-124
<b>T</b>	<b>2/23</b>	<b>Exam I</b>	

R	2/25	Online Assignment 3	
T	3/1	Communication and Influence in Conflict & Negotiation	8. Communication, p. 237 - 253; 12. Negotiation via E-Mail, p. 296 - 316
R	3/3	Consequences of Competitive Behavior Team Presentation 2	
T	3/8	Individual & Gender Differences	5. Perspectives on Conflict, p. 125-159; 14. Women Don't Ask, p. 321-327
R	3/10	Gender Differences in Conflict Team Presentation 3	
T	3/15	<b><i>Spring Break No Class</i></b>	
R	3/17	<b><i>Spring Break No Class</i></b>	
T	3/22	Perceptions and Biases in Conflict & Negotiations <i>Start Assignment</i>	<b>Bring \$3</b> (for additional material) Exercise Salary Negotiations
R	3/24	Online Assignment 4	
T	3/29	Power	Exercise The Power Game
R	3/31	Power (cont.)	17. Power: The Structure of Conflict, p. 333-374; 18. Where does Power Come From, p. 375-384

T	4/5	Cultural Conflict Team Presentation 4 <i>Deadline Assignment</i>	
R	4/7	Online Assignment 5	
T	4/12	Ethics in Conflict and Negotiation	Ethics in Negotiation p. 396-418
R	4/14	Online Assignment 6	
T	4/19	Ethics and Moral in Conflict Team Presentation 5	
R	4/21	Alternative Perspectives on Conflict at Work	
<b>W</b>	<b>04/27</b> <b>8:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Exam 2 (Final)</b>	

**Caveat**

I reserve the right to update or change portions of this syllabus in order to make the class a better experience for everyone. Any changes will be posted to Carmen.