

## **CMGT 576: Communication Strategies for Conflict Management**

Wednesday 6:30-9:30, (21770D), ASC 231

Spring 2008

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Office Hours: 5:30 – 6:30 Wednesday; 2:30-3:20 Th and by appointment

### Course Description

Whether as a member of management, organizational consultant, human resource professional or communication practitioner, you will be required to manage conflict successfully as a part of your job. Organizational conflict management is a specialized communication skill requiring theoretical understanding of human interaction, decision making, and organizational systems. That is, the nature and function of communication in organizational conflict management is shaped by the nature of the dispute, the power and status of the disputants, perceived outcomes, and --very importantly--whether or not the relationship is on-going.

### Course Objectives

- To examine the communication strategies that enable people to find joint gains/common grounds
- To develop communication strategies to protect your interests when joint gains do not exist
- To learn how to plan and conduct conflict management interventions for both interpersonal and organizational disputes

### Textbooks and Readings

Bush, R. & Folger, J. (2005). The promise of mediation: The transformative approach to conflict. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Stone, D., Patton, B. & Heen, S. (1999). Difficult conversations: How to discuss what matters most. New York: Viking Press.

Susskin, L & Field, P. (1996). Dealing with an angry public. New York: Free Press

Other Required Readings:

Electronic Copies: Whenever possible I have provided the link/database information so that you may download readings from USC's library (electronic resources). In some cases, electronic copies are not available and you can find the articles in the ARC (Annenberg Resource Center).

### Optional Materials

I will be placing some additional materials in the ARC (Annenberg Resource Center). These materials provide additional background about the study of communication and conflict.

**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!**

The 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

### Academic Integrity Statement

"The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor."

#### ADA Compliance Statement

"Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776."

#### Assignments

**10% Class Participation**

**35% Take Home Final Exam Due May 7**

**40% Research Project Paper (12-15 pages)**

Project includes an annotated bibliography, final paper and short ORAL REPORT. This project will be done in the first ½ of the semester.

##### OPTION A: Theory and Practice

Select a specific aspect of conflict management that is relevant to your career interests. Research 10-12 *academic* sources about this topic and then interview a person in your career area about his/her perspectives on this topic. This paper allows you to compare academic literature and practitioner perspective. Use APA style.

##### OPTION B: State of the Art Review.

Select a specific aspect of conflict management that is relevant to your career interests. Research 18-20 *academic* and/or high quality professional sources. Identify main themes within this literature; critique the research; and identify its value for people in your career. Use APA style.

##### Due Dates:

Annotated Bibliography - Feb. 6

Research Paper and Oral Report - March 5

**15% Simulation Reaction Paper – Due April 16**

Students will participate in several simulations that fall into two broad categories: negotiation and mediation. You will write a reaction paper (7 - 9 pages) on the simulations in *either* negotiation or mediation unit. In your paper address the following questions:

- What does the theoretical literature suggest should occur in this type of dispute? (Use APA format to cite the literature).
- What occurred in the simulation?
- Discuss why you think your experience did or did not match what “should” have happened.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### **Jan. 16 - Introductions**

**Student introductions and discussion about the assumptions people make about conflict.**

### **Jan. 23 and 30 – Conflict on the Individual and Dyadic Levels**

Stone, D., Patton, B. & Heen, S. (1999). Difficult conversations: How to discuss what matters most. New York: Viking Press.

#### **(Jan. 30 Finish Difficult Conversations Activity and discuss the following)**

Lutgen-Sandvik, P. (2007). ...But Words Will Never Hurt Me, Abuse and Bullying at Work: A Comparison Between Two Worker Samples. *Ohio Communication Journal*, 45, 81-105. Retrieved January 19, 2008, from Communication & Mass Media Complete database. Persistent link to this record:

<http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.usc.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=27494866&site=ehost-live>

Lutgen-Sandvik, P. (2006, December). Take This Job and .. : Quitting and Other Forms of Resistance to Workplace Bullying This article is based on the author's dissertation. *Communication Monographs*, 73(4), 406-433. Retrieved January 19, 2008, from Communication & Mass Media Complete database. Persistent link to this record:

<http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.usc.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=23219612&site=ehost-live>

Tracy, S., Lutgen-Sandvik, P., & Alberts, J. (2006, November). Nightmares, Demons, and Slaves. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 20(2), 148-185. Retrieved January 19, 2008, from Communication & Mass Media Complete database. Persistent link to this record:

<http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.usc.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=22854085&site=ehost-live>

### **Available from the Blackboard**

Pearson, C. M., & Porath, C. L. (2005). On the nature, consequences and remedies of workplace incivility: No time for "nice"? Think again. *Academy of Management Executive*, 19, 7-18.

### **Feb. 6 – Conflict in Organizations - Conflict & You**

Pondy, L. R. (1967). Organizational conflict: Concepts and models, *Administrative Science Quarterly* 12, (2), 296-320. Stable URL: <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0001-8392%28196709%2912%3A2%3C296%3AOCAM%3E2.0.CO%3B2-0>

Pondy, L. R. (1989). Reflections on Organizational Conflict. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 2(2), 94-98.

<http://proquest.umi.com.libproxy.usc.edu/pqdweb?did=393034761&sid=4&Fmt=10&clientId=5239&RQT=309&VName=PQD>

### **Annotated Bibliography Due**

### **Feb. 13 Competitive Negotiation**

**Required Reading Available in ARC**

Lewicki, R. J., Saunders, D. M., Barry, B. & Minton, J. W. (2004). Strategies and tactics of distributive bargaining. In Essentials of Negotiation (pp. 59-94). Boston: Irwin McGraw-Hill.

### **Feb. 20 and 27 Collaborative Negotiation**

#### **Required Reading Available in ARC**

Fisher, R., Ury, W. & Patton, B. (1993) Negotiation power: Ingredients in an ability to influence the other side. In Hall, L. (Ed.). Negotiation: Strategies for mutual gains (pp. 3 – 13). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Lewicki, R. J., Saunders, D. M., Barry, B. & Minton, J. W. (2004). Strategies and tactics of integrative negotiation. In Essentials of Negotiation (pp. 95-121). Boston: Irwin McGraw-Hill.

Weiss, J. & Hughes, J. (2005, March). Want collaboration?: Accept-and actively manage-conflict. Harvard Business Review, 92-101. Reprint R0503F

### **March 5 Research Reports**

**Research paper due; short oral presentations. Start mediation material.**

### **March 12 , 26, & April 2 Mediation**

**The following readings will be covered in the mediation section. When we get to this part of the semester, specific readings will be assigned for specific dates.**

Bush, R. & Folger, J. (2005). The promise of mediation: The transformative approach to conflict. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

#### **Required Reading Available in ARC**

Kressel, K. (2000). Mediation. In M. Deutsch and P. Coleman (Eds.), The handbook of conflict resolution (pp. 522 – 545). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Karambayya, R. & Brett, J. M. (1994). Managerial Third Parties: Intervention Strategies, Process, and Consequences. In J. P. Folger and T. S. Jones (Eds.), New directions in mediation: Communication research and perspectives (pp. 175-194). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

*The readings for April 9 – 30 are tentative; subject to the availability of guest speakers.*

### **April 9 Public Conflict**

Susskind, L & Field, P. (1996). Dealing with an angry public. New York: Free Press

### **April 16 Ideology and Dispute Resolution**

Wade-Benzoni, K. A., Hoffman, A. J., Thompson, L. II, Moore, D. A., Gillespie, J. J. & Bazerman, J. H. (2002). Barriers to resolution in ideologically based negotiations: The role of values and institutions. Academy of Management Review, 27, 41-57.

### **Simulation Reaction Paper Due**

### **April 23 & 30 Forums for Dialogue and "true" public participation**

**Readings to be assigned.**

**Wednesday May 7**

Take home final examination due no later than 7:00 pm. Submitted electronically to  
keough@usc.edu