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COM 4930 Interpersonal Conflict Management (Sect. 081B)
Course Syllabus ~ Spring 2014

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Office Hours: M 1:00-2:00 p.m., R 2:00-3:00 p.m. & 5:30-7:00 p.m., and by appointment

CLASS MEETING TIME/PLACE
This course takes place entirely online through Sakai.

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES
This course introduces students to fundamental communication skills, principles, theories and research relevant to effective conflict management in a variety of interpersonal contexts and relationships. Course readings and assignments are designed to help you:

1. Increase your ability to take others' perspectives.
2. Understand the role of communication in conflict and conflict management.
3. Identify, understand, and utilize positions, interests and goals to manage conflict in interpersonal relationships.
4. Develop a greater awareness of the role of power in interpersonal conflicts.
5. Understand the influence of emotion in interpersonal conflicts.
6. Improve your ability to manage emotion in yourself and others.
7. Expand your understanding and use of a range of conflict styles, strategies and tactics.
8. Understand how and why conflict occurs in different interpersonal relationships.
9. Be able to manage your interpersonal conflicts, and those of others, more effectively.

REQUIRED TEXTS
The readings are the cornerstone of this course. Please obtain and begin to read the textbook listed below.

Wilmot, W., & Hocker, J. (2010). *Interpersonal conflict (8th ed.)*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

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INSTRUCTOR & STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

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INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS
You should expect that Dr. Williams will:
1. Convey knowledge and passion for course material.
2. Conduct the class in a manner that is engaging.
3. Assign meaningful work that allows you to engage the course, its content and material.
4. Grade assignments and provide helpful feedback in a timely manner.
5. Reply to your emails within 48 hours.
6. Attempt to help you relate material in this course to your everyday life and relationships, as well as to relevant global, social, and political contexts.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to give themselves to and engage this course fully. If you do, you will gain invaluable knowledge and experiences that will forever influence the way you understand and communicate with yourself and others. To help accomplish this, you are expected to:

1. Complete and spend time contemplating the readings each week.
2. Complete and submit all assignments in advance of the deadline.
3. Participate actively in discussions and activities, using key terms and concepts.
4. Contribute positively to the classroom and group climates.
5. Take a self-motivated approach to the course, including personal accountability for your behavior and academic progress in the class.
6. Stay in contact with me throughout the semester. Communicate with me about the course, its content, about conflict in your life and how our course relates. Come to me, and let me help you, any time you have questions, problems or concerns related to your mastery of course objectives.

SAKAI REQUIREMENT

Check your UFL.edu email and our Saki course site frequently. All class functions are provided on Sakai. If you have computer/internet or Sakai-related problems or questions, you can contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-HELP [4357], or email helpdesk@ufl.edu. Your instructor is unable to assist in these matters, so please contact the Help Desk directly as needed.

EXAMS AND MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

Final Exam (35 points)

The final exam is cumulative (covers Chapters 1-10). The exam is taken on Sakai and may consist of any (or all) of the following types of questions: Multiple Choice, Multiple Answer, Matching, True/False, Short Answer, and/or Essay.

Study Guides (70 pts = 7 RQs @ 10 points each)

For the Study Guide (SG) assignments, you will answer select Review Questions from the end of each chapter in our textbook; see the Course Calendar for due dates and list of questions for each SG assignment. SGs are submitted/located in the "Assignments" section of our course Sakai site. Although there are 8 SG assignments throughout the semester, only your 7 highest scores will count toward your final grade (one grade will be dropped); this allows students to miss or do poorly on one SG without penalty.

Introduction Quiz (10 points)

The Introduction Quiz is taken on Sakai and covers information from our course Welcome Video, syllabus and Sakai site. The Introduction Quiz may consist of any (or all) of the following types of questions: Multiple Choice, Multiple Answer, Matching, True/False, Short Answer, and/or Essay.

Chapter Quizzes (60 pts = 3 Chapter Quizzes @ 20 pts each)

The Chapter Quizzes are taken on Sakai and cover chapter concepts and terminology. Quizzes may consist of any (or all) of the following types of questions: Multiple Choice, Multiple

Answer, Matching, True/False, Short Answer, and/or Essay. Note: You may attempt each quiz up to three times, and I will accept your highest score. If you are disconnected or otherwise unable to complete the quiz, that counts as one attempt regardless of whether or not you finish taking it. Therefore, it is imperative that you take the quizzes on a computer with a reliable internet connection.

Analysis Assignments (120 pts = 4 AAs @ 30 pts each)
The Analysis Assignments are designed to allow you to more fully engage course concepts and terminology by using them to better understand and manage conflict in the real world. See "Assignments" on Sakai for details. NOTE: Analysis essays must be based explicitly on chapter information, properly cited (see #2 under Discussion Assignments below for more about how to cite the textbook).

Discussion Assignments (30 points = 2 DAs @ 15 points each)
There are two Discussion assignments throughout the semester. For each assignment, you will make at least three posts that provide new analyses of the conflicts posted to the Discussion Board. I will accept your three best posts to grade in each forum; therefore, you are encouraged to make more than the minimum required. To be eligible for points, posts must meet the following criteria:
1. Make NEW, meaningful, readings-based contributions to the analysis. **Make new connections with the readings** (do not recycle what another student has already said). Base analyses clearly and **explicitly** on new information read in the textbook and lectures, with **proper in-text citation** of the textbook. See below for more detailed information about how to cite course material, or contact Dr. Williams for help.

2. **Cite our textbook throughout!** "Citing" means to give proper credit to the source of the information you are using to make your claims. For example, always put the page numbers in parentheses where you read about information that you are discussing. You should use direct quotes only when absolutely necessary (instead, you should work to put the authors' arguments into your own words). If you do use a direct quote, it MUST BE IN QUOTATION MARKS (with page numbers at the end in parentheses)! Failure to adhere to these rules will result in a "0" on the assignment. Consistent violations will result in disciplinary action (see Student Conduct section for more information). Below are some examples of acceptable ways to cite our textbook (Wilmot & Hocker, 2010) in this class.

IF YOU USE A DIRECT QUOTE, always include quotation marks and page numbers:

According to Wilmot and Hocker (2010), "topic-only solutions are rarely satisfying to conflict parties" (p. 86).

--OR--

According to our textbook, "topic-only solutions are rarely satisfying to conflict parties" (p. 86).

WHEN YOU PARAPHASE, include the page numbers in parentheses before the period at the end of the sentence:

Relational and Identity goals often lie at the heart of most conflicts (p. 85-86).

--OR--

According to the textbook, Relational and Identity goals often lie at the heart of most conflicts (p. 85-86).

POINTS & GRADES

POINTS
120 pts = 4 Analysis Assignments X 30 pts each
70 pts = 7 Study Guides X 10 pts each (highest 7 out of 8)
60 pts = 3 Chapter Quizzes X 20 pts each
30 pts = 2 Discussion Assignments X 15 pts each
35 pts = Final Exam
<u>10 pts = Introduction Quiz</u>
325 = TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE

ASSIGNMENT LETTER GRADE DESCRIPTIONS
A/- = Excellent! In addition to excellent quality and performance, work that earns an "A" exceeds minimum requirements and expectations.

B+/- = Very good! A grade of "B" indicates successful completion of all assignment requirements with little room for improvement. Please note that all minimum requirements must be satisfactorily completed to earn a grade of "B" or better. Writing skills and overall performance are above average.

C+/- = Good! A grade of "C" is the most commonly earned grade on course assignments. It indicates work in good standing. All minimum requirements are met, although some might need improvement. Writing skills are average to excellent.

D = Passing…but below average. The assignment's minimum requirements are not met and/or quality of work is less than average.

E = Not passing. Minimum requirements are not met and quality of work is poor, or work displays plagiarism.

FINAL GRADE
Below is the percentage and point break-down for each letter grade. Please be advised that final letter grades are determined by the number of points earned, and I do not round up.

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93 – 100 %
A-	90 – 92.9 %
B+	87 – 89.9 %
B	83 – 86.9 %
B-	80 – 82.9 %
C+	77 – 79.9 %
C	73 – 76.9 %
C-	70 – 72.9 %
D	60 – 66.9 %
E	0 – 59.9 %

Special Note Concerning Final Grades of Incomplete
A grade of "Incomplete" is given only to a student with extreme circumstances that prevent the student from completing course requirements during the semester in which s/he is enrolled. Please be forewarned that an "Incomplete" can only be given to a student who has completed at the 50% of the class and who is passing the course with a grade of "C" or better at the time the Incomplete is negotiated. See the University's policy for more information.

COURSE POLICIES

DEADLINES
All assignments are due before 11:59 p.m. EST (just before midnight) on their respective due dates. A 24-hour Extension period applies to all deadlines; this means that all assignments can be submitted up to 24 hours after the deadline with no penalty. ***After the Extension period, no work is accepted.*** There are no exceptions to this rule; therefore, it is imperative that you plan ahead and submit assignments at least one day in advance of the scheduled deadline. In the event of an extreme emergency that will prevent you from submitting work for an extended period of time, notify me immediately to discuss your options for the course (e.g., eligibility for a grade of Incomplete, see above for details).

SUBMITTING WRITTEN WORK
Most written assignments are submitted through the designated space under "Assignments" on Sakai. It is your responsibility to ensure that your assignment has been successfully received by Sakai prior to the deadline. Submit only .doc or .rtf files.

ATTENDANCE
Due to the online nature of this class, there are no excused or unexcused absences. Be certain to complete and submit assignments in advance of any outside responsibilities and obligations, including university-sponsored events and religious holidays.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT
All submitted work during the course, written or oral, will be the student's personal, original work, with credit being given to sources used. If a student violates this understanding, evaluations of work must be affected accordingly and if necessary, adjudication will be processed by procedures approved by the University of Florida Honor Court.

STUDENT CONDUCT
The Dial Center for Written and Oral Communication strives for a classroom climate that is comfortable for all. Students are expected to behave according to the UF student code of conduct in their classes. This means treating their instructors and fellow classmates with respect. To ensure a positive learning environment, students should not: make complaints publicly (in front of other students); attack the instructor verbally, physically, or in written form; or express reactions in the classroom that would bring harm to other students. Failure to meet the UF code of conduct can impact a student's class participation grade or result in referral to the UF judicial office. Class atmosphere can be made or broken by the approach that students take to the challenges of the course. Students that support others, show good humor in the face of obstacles, show dedication in the face of setbacks, and show grace when others are not doing as well will help to create a positive communication climate.

In a communication class, it is especially important for each of us to:
- Display respect for all members of the classroom – including the instructor and students;
- Pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities;
- Avoid racist, sexist, homophobic or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom;
- Avoid unnecessary disruption during class time (e.g., having private conversations, reading the newspaper, surfing the internet, doing work for other classes, making/receiving cell phone calls, text messaging, etc.).

DISABILITY AND SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS
Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me privately, as soon as possible, so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure a successful and educational experience. It is your responsibility both to notify me and to make the first contact with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Additionally, you must provide written documentation from the DRC at least one week prior to the date in which you are requesting accommodations.

Other resources are available at http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help for:
- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

RIGHT TO PRIVACY
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ensures that your student records (for any students over 18 years of age) are kept confidential. I will not release your grades to anyone other than you or school officials who are given permission to view your progress. Anyone other

than you (or an approved school official) may not request any information (beyond simple directory information) about you, your progress, or your status as a student in my class – this includes parents, partners, and other students. For more information, see the University of Florida website for The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTER SYSTEM
As a student in this class you're subject to the Acceptable Use Policies for UF's computer systems. Anyone violating these policies will receive an automatic grade of "E" for the course and will be referred to the University for Disciplinary Action as deemed appropriate by the University of Florida Honor Court.

CHANGES TO COURSE SYLLABUS/CALENDAR
I reserve the right to update or change portions of this course syllabus and calendar in order to make the class a better experience for everyone. This may be in response to suggestions from students, from my own observations, or as the result of requirements by the Department, College, or University. Changes will be posted to the course site on Sakai.

COURSE FEEDBACK
I welcome feedback about the course. If we wait until university evaluations at the end of the semester, I cannot make changes that will help you. I regularly ask the class for feedback and suggestions regarding the tests and assignments. Please share your thoughts with me in an open and constructive manner during the semester. You can make suggestions in class, with me privately during office hours, or via email.

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, COURSE PROBLEMS
If you have any concerns regarding the course, contact me via e-mail immediately. I am always willing to assist you in any way that I can. However, please do NOT contact me for computer, internet and/or Sakai-related problems. Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-HELP [4357], or email to helpdesk@ufl.edu for these matters. Computers do act up, so plan ahead and give yourself plenty of time before deadlines to complete and submit your work.

HAVE FUN WITH IT!
Feel free to play with the material, share your ideas, and contribute to the class. The more you engage the material and your fellow classmates, the more everyone will enjoy and benefit from the course.