

HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CRES 155/HEED 155
INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION
SPRING2010

Instructor Information

Instructor: Timothy J. Johnson
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Office Hours: Available to meet after class or by scheduled appointment. Please provide advance notice when possible.

Class Day, Time and Location

Mondays 4:30 PM – 7:20 PM, Location

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to different theories about conflict and different approaches to resolving conflict. Conflict will be explored in many contexts. Students will be asked to reflect on their own style of conflict resolution and on assigned reading materials.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will be provided a learning opportunity to:

- Define conflict from different perspectives
- Characterize two major approaches to conflict resolution; competition and collaboration
- Discuss the connection between conflict and justice
- Learn about different theories of conflict resolution
- Explain the relevance of motivation theory (Maslow) to conflict resolution
- Explore their own approaches to conflict and styles of managing conflict.
- Understand the connection between conflict and justice
- Describe the spectrum of intervention approaches: competition, collaboration, mediation, restorative dialogue, negotiation, arbitration, and others
- Explain the role of communication in conflict resolution
- Learn and practice basic conflict resolution skills
- Discuss the connection between culture and conflict and conflict resolution
- Discuss the impact of power and gender in conflict and conflict resolution

REQUIRED TEXTS

Interpersonal Conflict, William Wilmot, Joyce Hocker, McGraw Hill (eighth edition)
Be Quiet, Be Heard, Susan R. Glaser, Peter Glaser, Communications Solutions Publishing, 2006, Eugene, OR
Difficult Conversations, Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, Sheila Heen, Penguin Group, 1999, New York, New York

COURSE SCHEDULE

Please keep in mind that I may schedule guest conflict resolution practitioners from the “real world” to share their experiences and views. There may be an occasional need to accommodate guests’ schedules, and I ask that you remain as flexible as possible. Also, I will constantly be listening to hear what *you* are ready to talk or hear about or see next. Based on what I read in your journals for instance, I may and often do get a new idea of what we ought to discuss next. This means that I may not be able to foresee what is coming next in class, but I will periodically to review how the last few classes have been tied together.

January 31 Introductions and Orientation
What is my conflict resolution style?

February 7	Nature of Conflict, Perspectives on Conflict Pp. 1-69 (IP)
February 14	Interests and Goals, Power Pg 70-102 (IP)
February 21	Hidden Dimensions of Communication – Perception/Reality Pg 1-58 (BQBH)
February 28	Three Conversations Pg 1-58 (DC)
March 7	Emotions in Conflict Pg 194-217 (IP)
March 14	Aggression, Violence and Intractable Conflict Peacebuilding and non-violence Handouts
March 21	Conflict Resolution Approaches: Mediation, Negotiation, and Arbitration Pg 271-295 (IP)
March 28	Class Project
April 4	Restorative Justice Handouts
April 11	Third Party Intervention Pg 271-295 (IP) pg 129-217 (DC)
April 25	Culture and Conflict; Multicultural Conflict Handouts
May 2	Raising Delicate Issues, Power of Collaboration Pg 85-104 and 121-144 (BQBH)
May 9	Group Project Presentations

GRADING

Weekly Journals	200 points
Group Project & Presentation	300 points
Four Tests	200 points
Class Project	200 points
Individual Project	<u>100 points</u>
	1000 points

Grading Scale

A	900-1000	points
B	800- 899	points
C	700- 799	points
D	600- 699	points
F	0- 599	points

Ten Journals (20 points each)

One's ability to positively transform begins with self-awareness: an honest appraisal of all that one is and brings to the transformation process. What are our strengths, weaknesses, challenges, temptations,

areas of needed growth, areas of maturity, etc.? One goal of this class is to nurture self-reflection and introspection -- to honestly and clearly and apply the readings and class discussions to your conflict(s). To encourage attendance and participation, I will give you a question/topic at the end of each class. You are to report on how class discussion has affected your thinking and feeling in your journal. Your journal content should be personal reflections on the readings, films, and handouts and the connection between them and your personal experiences. Do not summarize. Rather, write with the eyes of a "Reflective Practitioner." The journal should demonstrate your understanding of the class content and how you think it may apply to your life. It is the student's responsibility to hand in or e-mail ten journals based on the weekly reading assignments, films, and handouts. Journals are due by the end of each class. Late journal entries will not be accepted. **Journals are to be typed, double spaced – 12 font, and should be no more than two pages in length. Grammar and punctuation should be reflective of a college student.**

Small Group Project & Presentation (300 points)

Cooperation and collaboration are critical to effective conflict resolution. The group presentation provides an opportunity for students to practice these skills. You will be put in groups of 3 - 4. **The group assignments will be distributed on Monday, February 14th. If you have any requests for group members, please let me know before February 11th.** You will be graded on your individual contribution to the group (100 points) and as a group (200 points). Your ½ page proposal grade counts towards the group grade. Your peer evaluation and reflective summary grades count towards your individual grade.

As a team, you will choose a topic related to conflict resolution, research the major features of that topic, divide the work among the group, and present your findings to the class. You may want to pursue a topic that you have encountered in your readings or that has emerged in class that interests you. Or you may choose a topic that is relevant to the course but hasn't been covered at all – perhaps one that connects with your major or with experiences you have had. Be creative – choose something of real interest to you.

Project steps/due dates

- 1. DUE February 28th:** Submit group ½ page proposals. These proposals must clearly state what you intend to research, why, and list at least two specific sources you intend to use.
- 2. Research your topic.** Group research must include information from at least five cited sources, three of which must be non-internet sources. Sources can include books, journals, videos, and interviews.
- 3. Prepare a 15 – 25 minute presentation.** Your class presentation should be informative, *creative*, interesting and involve equal participation from all group members. Your goal is to help the class learn about your topic. This will require teamwork, engaging your audience through effective public speaking, and time management. **Presentations will take place on May 2nd AND May 9th.**
- 4. On your presentation day, your group must submit:**
 - a complete outline of your presentation, including sources
 - a printout of PowerPoint slides (if you are using PowerPoint)
- 5. On your presentation day or the day after each individual must submit his/her group peer evaluations. This is a document detailing what you did for the presentation and your opinion of how the other members of your group participated in the development and delivery of the presentation. Your presentation will be evaluated by the class as well.**

Attendance & Participation

Regular attendance is expected. If you must be absent from a class, you are expected to contact the instructor before the next class to catch up. Dialogue is essential to conflict resolution, so students will be expected to participate in class discussions.

Four Tests (200 Points)

Four open book tests will be given throughout the semester. All tests will be open book, and will have a specific due date. Each test will be answered in type and no more than two pages in length.

Individual Project (100 points) “Conflict and Me” Paper

Due: Monday, May 9, 2010

Specifications: 3 – 5 pages, typed, double-spaced, 12 font, 1” margins

Grading: 85% - for thoroughness in addressing the topics, willingness to engage in honest self-reflection, and connection/applicability to readings/class discussion.
15% - writing logistics (clarity, grammar, spelling, punctuation) **Description:**

Experience

- *What have been my experiences with conflict?*
- *What effect have these experiences had on my life and my relationships?*

Assumption/beliefs, values

- *What are my assumptions or beliefs about conflict?*
- *What are my related values?*

Conflict Style

(Provide Person Style Inventory and Conflict Resolution Style results in this section)

- *What is my style, general approach, or typical pattern in responding to conflict?*
- *In what ways do I agree and/or disagree with the Personal Style Inventory and Conflict Resolution Style results?*
- *What are my strengths in conflict and communication?*
- *What are my challenges:*
- *In what areas would I like to grow? How will I work on these things?*

Other’s perception:

- *How does a significant other describe your conflict style? (For this, please ask the other person for their perspective on a conflictive interaction the two of you have had **OR** get someone to write several paragraphs about you on this topic that you can then include in your paper. Then add your own comments about their reflections. Identify the other person in this section and do some comparative work.)*
- *How does this person see you similarly to how you see yourself?*
- *Differently? How might you account for the difference?*

Class Project (200 points)

Part of learning conflict resolution is knowing how to work in a collaborative effort – with problem solving and consensus building. The Mediation and Conflict Resolution Center at Howard Community College and a past class established a Student Peace Alliance on Howard Community College Campus. **One option** for a class project will be to make contact with the SPA and take an active role in an event they are involved with this year. Other options for a class project include reaching out to schools, youth groups, community organizations, etc to schedule and present an introductory session on how conflict resolution can be applied to their conflicts.

Extra Credit Opportunity:

I am open to considering any suggestions from the class for extra credit projects. From time to time I may suggest extra credit opportunities..

Classroom Demeanor

Students are expected to treat others in the classroom with dignity and respect. This means limiting personal conversations during class time. Cell phones are to be turned off or put on vibrate. Answering cell phones is not acceptable except in pre-arranged understandings between the Instructor and the student. This means that listening to IPODs or other music devices during class time is not acceptable.