COMX 412.01M: Communication and Conflict

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COMX 412: Communication and Conflict
Syllabus
Spring 2014

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E-mail: greg.larson@mso.umt.edu
Office Phone: 243-4161
Office Hours: Monday 12:30 - 3:30
***Or by appointment***

Required Texts/Readings:


Other readings available on Mansfield Library E-Reserve. Password = comm412 Mansfield Library E-Res

Nature of the Course

This course provides an introduction to the study of conflict in interpersonal, organizational and social settings. We will begin by discussing the communicative nature of conflict and then move into discussing the ways in which conflicts can be identified, understood and managed. Students will leave the class with both a basic understanding of conflict theories as well as an applied knowledge as to how to practically manage conflicts in various settings.

The course will proceed in a combination of formats, including lecture, class discussion, group and individual activities. I expect you to consistently complete the assigned readings prior to each class session, as this will enhance our ability to critically process information in class as well as prepare you for the exams. I strongly encourage questioning minds and active contribution to both lecture and discussion.

As a result of satisfactorily completing the course, students should be able to do the following:

1. Understand how conflict is socially represented, constructed and maintained during interaction.
2. Understand their own conflict tendencies, habits and preferences.
3. Know principles of successful conflict management in interpersonal, group, organizational and societal contexts.
4. Identify and practice communication strategies, styles and tactics that are likely to facilitate successful conflict resolutions.
5. Recognize and respond to the situational nature of conflict experiences.
6. Make connections between conflict management and other communication theories/concepts.
7. Identify key ethical issues related to conflict management.

Attendance/Punctuality/Participation:

You are expected to attend class every day and to come to class on time. As much of the work in this class is reading, your attendance each class period to discuss and debate the readings is essential to the
success of the course. You will receive a grade for your participation. Please no cell phone calls and/or
text messaging during class. Unexcused absences will result in the loss of 3 pts per day from your
participation grade.

**Special Assistance:** If some extenuating circumstances beyond your control prevent you from meeting
your expectations for your attendance and performance, I expect you to contact me immediately. The
most important thing is that you contact me sooner rather than later. *Notice to Students with Documented
Disabilities:* I encourage students with disabilities, including but not limited to, chronic diseases, learning
disabilities, head injury and attention deficit/hyperactive disorder, to discuss with me, after class or during
my office hours, appropriate accommodations that might be helpful to you.

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction by supporting collaboration between
students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you have a disability and plan
to request modifications for this course, please contact your instructor during the first week of the
semester so that modifications can be provided in a timely manner. Please contact Disability Services for
Students if you have questions.

Disability Services for Students (DSS) 406.243.2243 (Voice/Text)
Lommasson Center 154 406.243.5330 (FAX)
University of Montana http://life.umt.edu/dss/

**Due Dates:** A late written assignment will be penalized one full grade for each day it is late and NO late
submissions will be accepted after the assignment has been graded and returned to your classmates.
Quizzes and tests must be completed on the day given (unless you have a documentable excuse).

**Academic Honesty:** All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an
academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need
to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review at
http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321

**Requirements of the Course/Grading:** So there are no surprises at the end of the semester, I encourage
you to keep track of your points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation/Attendance</th>
<th>50 pts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Online** (Discussion Board, Forums, Mini-
  writing assignments, etc.)                 | 50 pts           |
| **Written Assignments:**                   |                  |
| Newjack Conflict Paper                      | 50 pts           |
| **Tests:**                                  |                  |
| Exam 1                                      | 100 pts          |
| Exam 2                                      | 100 pts          |
| Exam 3                                      | 100 pts          |
| **Total Points**                            | 450 pts.         |

**Graduate Students Only:** Term paper: 200 points Annotated Bibliography: 50 points Total Points = 650 pts.
Letter grades are figured as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92-90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>87-83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>82-80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79-78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>77-73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72-70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69-68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>67-63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As per our departmental policy, you may not drop or change your grading option after the thirtieth instructional day except in the following situations: a) documentable accident or illness, b) no evaluation record for the course, c) documentable family/personal emergency, and d) documentable change in employment schedule that prevents completion of course (ref. relevant university documentation).