

CA 610 – Theories of Conflict Resolution & Mediation

Chadron State College

Course Syllabus – Spring 2014

Instructor: Kathleen C. Kirsch, Ph.D.

Phone: 308-432-6046

Office Hours:

Monday 1:00-2:30 pm

Wednesday 1:00-2:30 pm

Office: 219 Old Admin Building

email: kkirsch@csc.edu

Tuesday 10:00-11:00 am online

And by appointment

Credit Hours: 3 credit hours

Course Description

CA 610 - Theories of Conflict Resolution & Mediation is a graduate level course. The course approaches conflict resolution and mediation from a theory and skills perspective. Conflict mediation and resolution theory and skills in both personal and professional settings will be discussed.

Required Textbook / Materials:

Hocker, J. L. & Wilmot, W. W. (2013) Interpersonal Conflict. 9th Ed. McGraw Hill

Other readings provided by the instructor in Resources in CSC Online. You will check the READ IT section of each unit for information on readings.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- An understanding of the nature of interpersonal conflict
- Understand how to take a transactional approach to conflict – to learn how to constructively resolve conflict “with” others.
- Understanding of how different conflict “choices” promote more constructive and productive resolution to conflict situations.
- Identify and analyze different conflict types
- Understand of how to use the S-TLC System for communicating effectively in conflict situations.
- Apply appropriate communication responses in different conflict situations and styles
- Understand when and how to incorporate negotiation principles and techniques in conflict situations.
- Evaluate how to manage the “process” of conflict toward constructive conflict resolution.
- Understand how to create and maintain favorable communication climate during conflict situations.
- Understand the role of stress and anger in conflict situations
- Understand the role of creating & maintaining “positive face”, “autonomous face” and “face saving” in conflict situations.
- Understand the concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation with others following conflict situations.

Method of Instruction:

This course will be conducted completely online. Students are responsible for checking in to Sakai, participating in discussion forums, completing assignments and communicating with instructor as necessary.

Course Design:

This course is designed to be completed entirely online. As a graduate level course, students will be expected to be actively engaged each week in a strategic combination of activities to complete the R.A.D.A.R. Learning Cycle:

R.A.D.A.R. Learning Cycle = Read and Discuss: Apply & Reflect

The R.A.D.A.R. Learning Cycle includes a strategic combination of learner-content interaction, learner-instructor interaction, and learner-learner interaction to help each student successfully achieve each week's learning outcomes.

Assignments:

Students will be expected to successfully complete the following graded assignments in this course:

- First Week "Getting Started" Assignments **10 Points**
(3 small assignments)
 - Active Participation in 6 "In-Depth Discussions" (20 points each) **120 Points**
(See course schedule & calendar below for posting due dates)
 - Reflection Journal with 10 "In-Depth Entries" (10 points each) **100 Points**
(Complete Journal with entries 1-10 submitted together by April 11th)
 - Final Conflict Focus Paper **100 Points**
(Due April 26)
 - Final Week "CRM Goals Evaluation" Assignment **5 Points**
(Due May 1th)
-

Total Points Possible:

335 Points

Grading:

Final Grades in this course will be assigned according to the percentage of points earned by each student out of the total points possible according to the following grading scale:

A	=	100 - 90 %
B	=	89 - 80 %
C	=	79 - 70 %
D	=	69 - 60 %
F	=	Below 60%

* Percentages will be rounded up to the next letter grade at .5 and above. Grades below .5 will retain that grade level.

In-Depth Discussion Participation Requirements:

This **IS NOT** a self-paced course. Actively engaging in course discussions will be essential for your success in this class. Because your active discussion participation is worth almost 1/3rd of your course grade, I strongly recommend that you devote great effort toward being actively engaged in each Unit's discussion. The following information is intended to help you successfully fulfill the discussion requirements in this class. **PLEASE READ BELOW COMPLETELY and VERY CAREFULLY!!!**

All students are required to be actively engaged in "In-Depth" Discussions scheduled throughout the course calendar. In this class, there will be one (1) - "Self-Introduction" discussion forum during the first week of class and then seven (6) discussion forums, each running for 1.5 weeks, which are focused on discussing specific topics being covered in the course content.

For each Unit's discussion, several initial questions will be posed by the instructor which are intended to encourage all students to critically examine and explore different perspectives on the course content. Occasionally, the instructor will also present several "follow-up" questions intended to encourage students to build upon the current discussion and/or to encourage students to consider other directions of dialogue on the topics being discussed for that unit.

Within each discussion period, all students must contribute a specific quantity of discussion posts - **AND** - most important - each discussion post must satisfy very specific "In-Depth" content requirements. Please review the instructions below **VERY CAREFULLY** to ensure that you understand the **"4-Part In-Depth Discussion Format"** requirements that must be followed for all forum discussion postings.

For the "Self Introduction" discussion forum during the first week of class, all students must complete the following requirements:

1. Post a complete "Self-Introduction" posting to the discussion forum.
2. Review and respond to at least 4 of your classmate's discussion posts within the 1-week (7 Day) discussion period. These can be responses to your classmate's "Self Introduction" postings and/or responses to your classmate's responses to your "Self-Introduction" posting, and/or your responses to your classmate's responses to other classmate's original discussion postings, as long as you have contributed at least 4 separate discussion postings to the forum, in addition to your own "Self-Introduction" post. (NOTE: These posts do not have to follow the "4-Part In-Depth Format" requirements, but should reflect substantive interaction and meaningful dialogue with your classmates).

For each of the remaining seven (6) Unit discussions in the class, all students must complete the following requirements:

1. Post **at least 3** fully "In-Depth" discussion posts within each 1.5-Week (9 Day) Discussion Period:
 - **Days 1-3 of Each Discussion Period:**
Within the first three days of each discussion period, all students must submit at least 1 "In-Depth" post - that fully satisfies the "4-Part In-Depth Discussion Format" requirements outlined below - in response to at least one of the initial questions posed by the instructor.
 - **Days 4-6 of Each Discussion Period:**
Sometime between days 4-6 of each discussion period, all students must review, consider and substantively respond "In-Depth" to at least 1 of their peer's discussion postings. In order to be considered "In-Depth", each post must fully satisfy the "4-Part In-Depth Discussion Format"

requirements outlined below.

- **Days 7-9 of Each Discussion Period:**

Sometime between days 7-9 of each discussion period, all students must review, consider and substantively respond "In-Depth" to at least 1 more of their peer's discussion postings. These can respond to your peer's responses to your postings and/or to any other peer's postings, so that you have contributed at least 5 fully "In-Depth" discussion postings within the unit's discussion. In order to be considered "In-Depth", each post must fully satisfy the "4-Part In-Depth Discussion Format" requirements outlined below.

NOTE: You are required to be actively engaged in discussion interaction throughout each discussion period. **DO NOT** submit all of your discussion postings on one or two days of the week. Failure to follow the discussion guidelines and timelines above, without prior approval from the course instructor will result in a 4-point penalty on the overall student's discussion participation score for that discussion cycle (i.e a score of 16 (80%) would become a 12 (60%).

2. Within **EACH** of the required **3 posts** students must satisfy the following **"4-Part In-Depth Discussion Format"** requirements:

- For responses to the initial discussion questions, please use the following format for your posts:

- **Part 1:** Label this part of your post: **"My Perspective"**

Under this label, please provide at least 3 well developed paragraphs explaining your detailed perspective on the discussion topic(s)/question(s) that have been posed.

- **Part 2:** Label this part of your post: **"Support from Readings & Outside References"**

Under this label, please provide at least 4 well developed paragraphs that explain how your perspective is supported by specific quotes or passages from your textbook readings - AND - also from outside reference materials including other textbooks, journals, articles, or any other relevant internet resources that you find applicable to support your perspective using <http://www.google.com> or other internet search engines. In this section of your post, in addition to referencing specific page numbers from your text (i.e. pg. 214) where you are referencing specific quotes or passages, please also include the specific reference information or internet URL for outside materials that you are citing. Finally, please make sure that you provide a detailed explanation of how you believe each reference, quote, passage that you are citing specifically supports your perspective on the discussion topic(s).

- **Part 3:** Label this part of your post: **"Support from My Own Experience & Observations"**

Under this label, please provide at least 4 well developed paragraphs that explain how your perspective is supported by your own specific experiences and observations. Please provide very detailed, vivid descriptions of specific incidents or events that you have experienced or observed - and - then explain how these experiences and/or observations from these real situations help illustrate / substantiate / justify your perspective on the discussion topics.

- **Part 4:** Label this part of your post: **"Food for Thought, Insights Gained & Lessons Learned"**

Under this label, please provide at least 3 well developed paragraphs that are intended to promote or to provoke additional dialogue with your classmates to build off of your perspective shared in your post. This can involve "taking a stand" on the discussion topic that offers alternative or unique perspectives that you want to challenge your peers to consider, respectfully challenging other student perspectives that have been presented previously in the discussion or perspectives presented in your textbook readings, and/or presenting any other "food for thought, insights gained and/or lessons learned" from your consideration of the current discussions content and questions.

- For responses to your peer's postings, please use the following format for your posts:

- **Part 1:** Label this part of your post: **"My Perspective on (Name of Peer)'s Posting"**

Under this label, please provide at least 4 well developed paragraphs explaining your detailed perspective that provides a substantive and meaningful response in reaction to the perspective presented in your peer's posting. Your response needs to be something more than "I agree and here is why..." and must provide something "new" to add to and enhance the insights to be gained from the combination of your perspective being integrated with your peer's. You are encouraged to constructively challenge or critique the point of view being presented by your peer's and vice-versa - and/or - if your perspective re-enforces the perspective shared by your peer, your post must offer additional perspective that clearly adds value to what has already been stated.

- Parts 2, 3 and 4 of your post should follow the same guidelines as outlined above under the previous section labeled "For responses to the initial discussion questions" - but - should reflect a clear consideration, reflection and response to the reference materials and experiences shared in the peer's posting and an explanation of how your understanding of the readings, outside references, and your own experiences relate / compare / contrast to your peer's. Please make sure you separate each part of each post into the 4 separate "Parts" as outlined above and provide the appropriate "Labels" for each part, including:

- **Part 1:** **"My Perspective on (Name of Peer)'s Posting"**
- **Part 2:** **"Support from Readings & Outside References"**
- **Part 3:** **"Support from My Own Experience & Observations"**
- **Part 4:** **"Food for Thought, Insights Gained & Lessons Learned"**

NOTE: You should expect to compose the equivalent of a 2 to 3 page, single spaced, 12-point font word document in order to fully satisfy the "3-Part In-Depth Discussion Format" expectations for EACH of your required posts.

NOTE: The key issue is to ensure that you are:

- #1 - able to demonstrate substantive and meaningful perspectives on the course content in relation to the discussion questions / topics being posed,
- #2 - able to support and justify your perspective based on your demonstrating how it relates / applies to your readings and outside reference materials;
- #3 - able to support and justify your perspective based on demonstrating how your point of view has been exhibited in actual real-world situations that you have directly experienced and/or observed; and
- #4 - able to acknowledge and articulate the "learning implications" of your having considered and reflected on the course content and discussion topics and that you are able to engage in and promote additional learning with your classmates through perpetuating the "in-depth" dialogue in each discussion cycle.

NOTE: Because of the expected length of each "In-Depth" discussion post, you are encouraged to compose your postings, initially, as a Microsoft Word document and "Save" each post on your computer as a separate file. This will provide you with a saved copy in case there is an "error" or "timeout" problem that can sometimes occur online if the computer does not detect activity while you have been typing over a long period of time. TRUST ME...please learn from the "lessons learned the hard way" from past students...and make sure you save a copy of each of your posts on your own computer before actually posting them to the course "FORUMS" area. Once you have a copy "SAVED", then please proceed to submit your post to the FORUMS area by copy/pasting from your word document into the discussion post area.

NOTE: Please DO NOT submit your discussion posts as word document attachments in the discussion FORUMS area. In order for your classmates and I to be able to read and respond to each

discussion post as it relates to other postings above and below in the discussion "thread", it is important that all discussion posts appear as text within the Forums area. Accordingly, posts that are submitted as "attachments" will not be accepted toward the minimum of 3 posts required for each discussion cycle.

NOTE: Discussions will be "CLOSED" after each 2-week unit period. Once it is "Closed" everyone will still be able to read/review all postings which have been submitted, but no new postings may be submitted to the discussion area.

In-Depth Journal Reflection Requirements (100 Points):

All students will be required to complete 10 "In-Depth" journal entries during the course that will be combined and submitted together as a complete "Reflection Journal" by April 25th. The intention of each journal entry is to challenge you to reflect on how the course concepts covered every few weeks have actually "played out" in your own experiences. Through direct application, synthesis, analysis & evaluation of course concepts, your journal entries should help you develop a very practical understanding of how you can use these concepts to help you engage in more positive and productive conflict management, resolution & mediation practices in future conflict situations you encounter.

Additional details will be provided on each "Journal Entry" assignment that clarifies the specific expectations for what your journal reflections should cover. "In-Depth" format requirements for each journal entry will be similar to those described above in the discussion requirements section. It is assumed that each journal entry will represent the equivalent of at least a 2-4 page, single spaced, 12-point font document providing an in-depth application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation of course concepts applied to specific situations you have directly experienced / observed. To provide you with adequate time to "focus" on your journal entries, the course schedule/calendar has been segmented into 2 week units with the first part of the 2 week period providing opportunity for the "Reading and Discussion" of the course content and the latter part of that period devoted to providing you with time to "Apply and Reflect" on your journal entry assignments. You will actually be provided with the journal entry assignments at the start of each 2 week period, so you can get started on these entries at any time that works for your schedule, but I am intentionally "closing" the discussions several days before the end of each 2 week period so that you will have dedicated time to "focus" on these important "Reflection" activities. Additionally, although it will be very important for you to work on these journal reflections as they are assigned throughout the course, I have also tried to build in maximum "flexibility" for your time/effort by setting the due date for all 10 journal entries to be submitted together in one complete "Reflection Journal" on April 25th. This way, you can budget your time according to when you have the ability to really "focus" on completing these reflection assignments without feeling like you are "under a deadline" to complete these each week. That said - PLEASE DO NOT WAIT UNTIL APRIL TO WORK ON YOUR JOURNAL ENTRIES!!! Each journal entry will require a significant commitment of time and effort in order for you to satisfactorily fulfill the "In-Depth" application and reflection requirements of each assignment. This is why I have provided dedicated time every 2 weeks for you to "focus" on these. Please use this time as intended.

Additionally, please understand that the time that is dedicated to focusing on these reflection journal assignments is intentionally AFTER the discussion period for each unit. THIS IS INTENTIONAL in that it is expected that your journal reflections will actually serve as a reflective EXTENSION on what has been presented in the discussion forums and NOT a repetition of what has already been presented in the unit's previous discussion postings. In other words, the reflection journals should use the unit's discussion forum postings as another source of reference information, along with the textbook readings and other outside references, etc. but should be substantively different from the discussion forum postings themselves. As an extension of the forum dialogue, the reflection journals should go "deeper" and "farther" in considering the reflection journal assignment questions and expectations and should use the discussion forums as one source for support, but MUST be substantively different and offer meaningful extension and elaboration on what has been presented in the respective unit's discussion forum postings. PLEASE RE-READ THIS and consult with the instructor if this is not understood clearly as THIS IS AN

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENT of this portion of the course requirements which represents 1/3 of your course grade.

Final Analysis Focus Paper Requirements (100 Points):

At the end of the semester, all students will be expected to complete a final "In-Depth" Conflict Analysis Focus Paper involving a comprehensive application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation of course content covered throughout the semester to actual conflict situations. This Final Analysis Focus Paper will represent the equivalent of your Final Exam in the course.

Explanation & Rationale for My Teaching / Facilitation Style:

The primary goal of my teaching / facilitation style is to create challenging activities that are strategically designed to promote positive and productive learning experiences for each of you individually as well as for all of you collectively. I see my role in the process as a facilitator or guide...similar to a "Tour Guide" on a "Learning Safari". If you think about that, please put the following into perspective: A tour guide cannot control whether or not you enjoy or "get something" meaningful out of the experience...only you can do that! The tour guide is not the "center of attention" but may offer suggestions or guidance from the sideline or in the background which is intended to help you navigate through your experience. A tour guide does not "have the experience for you" and should not "tell you what you should do, think, feel, etc. along the way".

Accordingly, as your guide/facilitator in this class, you will not learn anything FROM ME. I will not serve as an "Expert" that expects to transfer knowledge or skills I have acquired to you. Instead, I see my role as setting up challenging learning experiences for you to complete and to challenge you to invest yourself in the 'discovery' process. Then while you "dive in" and devote a considerable amount of thought, time and effort into these experiences, if I see anything along the way that I think would be helpful or if I sense that you may be "off-track" or "falling too far behind", I will intervene as needed to help ensure that you stay on course...but please understand...there will be only one source of your learning in this class...and that will be from YOU engaging meaningfully and deeply in the experiences provided for you to invest yourself into.

Please do not take my "guide on the side" approach to be a lack of interest or involvement with your learning. Instead, I am sincerely interested in make sure that you have an exceptional learning experience in this class and I will create and facilitate the experiences placed in front of you with that as my primary goal. Along the way, please do not hesitate to let me know if / when you need additional guidance, support and/or feedback from me and I will sincerely do my best to assist you throughout the course.

Spring 2014 - Course Schedule & Assignment Calendar

*The following course schedule is tentative and may be changed as the semester progresses.
Any changes made will be communicated to students by the instructor.*

Weeks	Dates	Readings	Assignments	Target Due Dates
Unit 1 Week 1	Jan. 13-19	Syllabus	Syllabus Review CRM Goals Assessment Self-Introductions	___ Due: Jan. 13-16 ___ Due: Jan. 13-16 ___ Jan. 13-15 Post Self-Introduction ___ Jan. 13-17 Respond to 2 Peers ___ Jan. 13-19 Respond to 2 Peers
Syllabus Review, CRM Goals Assessment, & Discussion Forum Posts - Due: January 13th				
Unit 2 Weeks 2 & 3	Jan. 20- Feb 2	Nature of Conflict	Reading & Discussion	___ Respond to 2 Initial Questions ___ Respond to 1 Peer ___ Respond to 1 Peer
			Application & Reflection	___ Jan. 23-27: Focus on Journals #1 & 2
Journal Entries # 1 & 2 Your Application, Synthesis, Analysis & Evaluation on "The Nature of Conflict"				
Unit 3 Weeks 4 & 5	Feb 3 -16	Conflict Perspectives	Reading & Discussion	___ Respond to 2 Initial Questions ___ Respond to 1 Peer ___ Respond to 1 Peers
			Application & Reflection	___ Focus on Journals #3 & 4
Journal Entries #3 & 4 Your Application, Synthesis, Analysis & Evaluation on "Perspectives on Conflict"				
Unit 4 Weeks 6 & 7	Feb. 17- March 2	Conflict Variables	Reading & Discussion	___ Respond to 2 Initial Questions ___ Respond to 1 Peer ___ Respond to 1 Peer
			Application & Reflection	___ Focus on Journals #5 & 6
Journal Entries #5 & 6 Your Application, Synthesis, Analysis & Evaluation on "Conflict Variables"				

Weeks	Dates	Readings	Assignments	Target Due Dates
Unit 5 Weeks 8,9,10 Week 9 Midterm Break	March 3-8 Midterm Break March 10-14 March 17-22	Differing Approaches to Conflict	Reading & Discussion	* Start with Journal #7 - Pt. 1 ___ Respond to 2 Initial Questions ___ Respond to 1 Peer March 10-14 = Midterm Break ___ Respond to 1 Peer
			Application & Reflection	___ Focus on Journal #7 - Pt. 1 ___ Focus on Journal #7 - Pt. 2
Journal Entry #7 - Part 1 & 2 Your Application, Synthesis, Analysis & Evaluation on "Approaches to Conflict"				
Unit 6 Weeks 11 & 12	March 23-30	Responding Constructively to Conflicts	Reading & Discussion	___ Respond to 2 Initial Questions ___ Respond to 1 Peer ___ Respond to 1 Peer
			Application & Reflection	___Mar. 27-30: Focus on Journal #8
Journal Entry #8 Discussion Synthesis, Analysis & Evaluation on "Responding Constructively to Conflicts"				
Unit 7 Weeks 13 & 14	March 31-Apr. 13	Post-Conflict Realities	Reading & Discussion	___ Respond to 2 Initial Questions ___ Respond to 1Peer ___ Respond to 1Peer
Unit 8 Week 15	Apr. 14-2	Mediating Other's Conflicts	Application & Reflection	___Apr. 14-16: Focus on Journal #9 & #10 ___Apr. 17-19: Compile Final Journals 1-10
Journal Entry #9 & #10 Discussion Synthesis, Analysis & Evaluation on "Post-Conflict Realities" and "Mediating Other's Conflicts" ALL Journal Entries #1 - 10 - Due: April 25th				

Weeks	Dates	Readings	Assignments	Target Due Dates
Unit 9 Weeks 15 & 16	Apr. 28-May 7	Complete Final Conflict Analysis Focus Paper		
Final Conflict Analysis Focus Paper Due: May 2nd				
Unit 10 Week 16	May 5-7	Afterword	____ CRM Goals Evaluation	____ : Complete CRM Goals Evaluation
CRM Goals Assessment & Evaluation Due: May 7th				

The schedule above is intended to offer flexibility "within" each 2-3 week unit...however...it is important to keep up with this schedule so that all assignments within a particular 2-3 week period are completed by the end of that unit. Please **DO NOT** fall behind (i.e. Do not plan to submit assignments or discussion postings after the unit's scheduled end date without advanced approval from your instructor). Also - Please **DO NOT** work ahead (Do not look ahead to future unit's content or work on future unit's assignments unless directed to do so by the instructor) as the instructor will likely be continually adapting materials prior to each unit's scheduled start date.

Course Policies:

Student Behavior - Academic Honesty:

Students are encouraged and expected with the assistance of faculty to conduct themselves in conformity with the highest standards with regard to academic honesty. Any violation of college, state or federal standards with regard to plagiarism, cheating or falsification of official records will not be tolerated. Students violating such standards will be advised and disciplined by the instructor and should be advised that such violations may result in course failure, suspension or dismissal from the college. It is recommended that students seek the advice of instructors as to the proper procedures to avoid such violations.

The following are examples of plagiarism:

- Handing in an assignment that someone else has written and claiming the work as your own.
- Handing in an assignment that contains, sections, paragraphs, sentences or key phrases that someone else has written without documenting the source(s) for each portion of the assignment not written by you.
- Handing in an assignment that contains paraphrased ideas from another source, published or unpublished, without documenting the source for each paraphrase. (changing around a few words in a sentence from the sources is not sufficient to avoid plagiarism.)

Someone else in the three statements above may refer to a published author, another student, an internet source, or any person other than the student claiming credit for the assignment. Documenting means

providing the name of the author, the source you have used, and other relevant bibliographical information such as the address for web sites used for sources. If you do not know how to document sources within your paper, ask your professor or the reference librarian for assistance. (Rev. Academic Review: Oct 6, 1998) This policy will be enforced. The first offense will result in 1) a zero for the assignment and 2) the final course grade dropped two letter grades. The second offense will result in a grade of an "F" for the course.

Attendance Policy: Online learning requires that all students actively engage in online interaction with the course content, with other students, and with the instructor. Because active online interaction and engagement is so important for student learning in online courses, the weekly discussion participation points are intentionally set to represent a significant portion of the overall course grade. Accordingly, "attendance" in this online class is required and all students are expected to "attend" class regularly by logging in frequently and actively engaging in weekly online discussions.

Nondiscrimination Policy/Equal Educational Opportunity Policy:

Chadron State College is committed to an affirmative action program to encourage admissions of minority and female students and to provide procedures, which will result in equal treatment of all students. The College is committed to creating an environment for all students that is consistent with nondiscriminatory policy. To that end, it is the policy of Chadron State College to administer its academic employment programs and related supporting services in a manner which does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability or marital status. Students request for reasonable accommodation based upon documented disabilities should be presented within the first two weeks of the semester, or within two weeks of the diagnosis to the Disabilities Counselor (432-6461; CRITES 338)

Disclaimer: This syllabus and schedule is articulated as an expectation of class topics, learning activities and expected student learning. However, the instructor reserves the right to make changes in this schedule that, based on professional judgment, would result in enhanced or more effective learning on the part of the students. These modifications will not substantially change the intent of objectives of this course and will be done within the policies and procedures of Chadron State College.