



U272-511: Constructive Conflict Management

Course Format: Online

Course Facilitator: Gayle Reed, Ph. D.

Course Author/s: Gayle Reed, Ph. D.

Course credits: 3

Pre/Corequisites: None; Appropriate for third-year or higher college or graduate students.

Course Description: Readings, videos, discussions, role plays, and writing activities focused on understanding the nature and possible outcomes of interpersonal conflict, with the primary goal of providing students with effective communication skills to maximize productive outcomes in conflict situations. Discusses a process view of conflict, looking at both destructive and productive approaches to conflict; communication options; the effect of power differences on conflict climate; individual and group approaches to conflict management, and the role of forgiveness and reconciliation. Also includes approaches to conflict in the classroom.

Required Course Materials

- Abigail, Ruth Anna., and Dudley D. Cahn. *Managing conflict through communication*. 4th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2011. Print.
- Wheeler, Edyth J. *Conflict resolution in early childhood: helping children understand and resolve conflicts*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2004. Print.
- *Constructive Conflict Management Reader*, compiled by Gayle Reed (Madison, 2013).

Course Learning Objectives

- Comprehend the underlying nature of conflict and the communication options in conflict situations.
- Analyze and evaluate various approaches to constructive conflict management.
- Apply effective perspective taking and communication practices to example conflict situations.
- Create a developmentally appropriate educational application for effective conflict communication skills and/or conflict mediation.

Course Overview

MODULE #	MODULE TOPIC	EVALUATED ACTIVITIES
1	Managing the Conflict Process; Introduction to Conflict Studies	Reflection Assignment and Written Assignment
2	A Process View of Conflict	Reflection Assignment and Written Assignment
3	Communication Options in Conflict	Reflection Assignment and Written Assignment
4	Responding to Conflict: The S-TLC System	Reflection Assignment and Written Assignment
5	Managing Win-Lose Conflicts: Negotiation	Reflection Assignment, Written Assignment, Midcourse Reflection Application Paper 1
6	Breaking the Cycle of Escalation; Managing the Conflict Climate	Reflection Assignment and Written Assignment
7	Managing Anger	Reflection Assignment and Written Assignment
8	Managing Conflict with Forgiveness	Reflection Assignment and Written Assignment
9	Managing Others' Disputes through	Reflection Assignment, Written Assignment,



	Mediation	Midcourse Reflection Application Paper 2
10	Community Applications; Developmental Aspects of Conflict Management	Reflection Assignment and Written Assignment
11	Programs for Children and Adolescents	Reflection Assignment and Written Assignment
12	Managing Social Conflicts	Reflection Assignment, Written Assignment, Summary Reflection Application Paper

Evaluation Methods

Your final grade will be based on your performance on the following:

- 1) Reflection Assignments (6 graded) = 30 points
- 2) Written Assignments (12 total) = 108 points
- 3) Reflection Application Papers (2 total) = 50 points
- 4) Summary Reflection Application Paper (1 total) = 50 points

Reflection and Journal Entries *(5 points each)*

You will be asked to have a discussion with a friend, colleague, or family member about the readings (text and articles) and then write a reflection journal entry. Discussion questions as well as general reflection guidelines will be provided for each of the 12 unit topics, but **you are responsible for only 6 of these and submit them for grading**. Even though all are valuable for your learning experience, you may want to focus on the 6 units for which you are most likely to engage in a discussion and turn in a journal reflection. Alternately, you may want to do more than 6 and then choose the best 6 to turn in for a grade. The discussion should be a conversation between colleagues or friends but also a conversation with the authors of the readings or articles. In some of the discussions, you will engage in role plays of some of the constructive conflict management skills. The journal entries will reflect your ability to contrast and compare ideas, to think of pros and cons of application of these ideas, and to reflect on what you have learned and on what you contributed to the conversation. You will be assessed on the best 6 of these topic reflection journal entries. These journal entries will also provide a working foundation for your reflection/application papers. Please use the Reflection Discussion Form to structure your conversation.

Written Assignments *(9 points each)*

You will be asked to answer three essay question sets for each learning unit topic set. This essay paper will be typically 2-3 pages long, and the questions will guide you to demonstrate your comprehension of a specific topic, to analyze and evaluate the theory, assigned case study, role-play, or visual representation on this topic, and to explore a personal or professional application. You will be assessed on all 12 assignments for the unit topics.

Reflection Application Papers *(25 points each)*

You will be asked to complete 2 midcourse papers that integrate the course content (including the case studies and role plays) and the ideas generated in your discussions and reflection journal entries. You will be given guiding questions to write a scenario and recommendations for constructive conflict management based on Units 1 through 5 for the first midcourse paper. You will be given guiding questions to write a scenario and recommendations for the management of difficult conflicts based on Units 6 through 9 for the second midcourse paper. You will be asked to explain some important aspects of the principles of conflict management, describe an application that takes into account these principles, explain expected outcomes, discuss barriers to the expected outcomes, and describe how you would evaluate the effectiveness of the conflict management skills.

Summary Reflection Application Paper *(50 points)*



You will be asked to submit a final paper similar to the midcourse reflection papers in every respect except that it will be cumulative (all topics will potentially be included). You will be given guiding questions to consider constructive management principles (Units 1 through 5), managing conflict difficulties (Units 6 through 9) as a foundation for teaching constructive conflict management to children and adolescents (elementary, middle school, high school, youth service, or environments of your choice). Your unit essay assignments, role-plays, and discussions can be helpful as well. You will be asked to explain some important principles of constructive conflict and then describe the application of those principles for the age group of your choice. You will also be asked to give a developmental rationale for the application for the age group of your choice. Finally, you will be asked to explain expected outcomes, discuss barriers to the expected outcomes, and describe how you would evaluate the effectiveness of the conflict management skills.

Grading Scale

The following grading scale is used to evaluate all course requirements and determine your final grade:

A = 93–100	B = 83–87.9	C = 70–77.9	D = 60–69.9
AB = 88–92.9	BC = 78–82.9		F = Below 60

Pass/Fail Option

Students who enroll in an Independent Learning (IL) course under the pass/fail option will receive a final grade of S in place of a final grade equivalent to an A, AB, B, BC, or C and a final grade of U in place of a final grade equivalent to a D or F.

Program Policies and Statements

Course Faculty Statement: The IL program enlists qualified UW faculty to develop and facilitate IL courses within their content area of expertise. There are two categories of IL faculty: Course Authors lead course development, and Course Facilitators support students enrolled in IL courses. Similar to course instructors, Course Facilitators evaluate and provide feedback on submitted coursework and respond to student inquiries regarding course content or evaluation.

Please note that, while typically occurring during summer months, Course Facilitator transitions can occur at any time even when students are in the process of completing an IL course. Students will be notified of any Course Facilitator changes via email and communication embedded in their online course. Our goal is to make Course Facilitator transitions as smooth as possible to avoid disrupting students in the process of completing a course.

Evaluation of Student Work Statement: Course Facilitators are committed to providing students with timely feedback of submitted work. Students should expect to receive feedback within 3 business days, exclusive of holidays. For example, if a student submits an assignment on Thursday, that student should expect to receive feedback on the assignment from a Course Facilitator by midnight on Tuesday of the following week. On occasion, a Course Facilitator may experience higher-than-usual volumes of submitted work from students enrolled in the course and may need additional time for evaluation. Course Facilitators will notify students of any anticipated delays via email and communication embedded in their online course. Students should reach out to our Student Services team at il@uwex.edu with any concerns regarding the timeliness of Course Facilitator feedback.



Student Work Submission Policy: Students are strongly encouraged to wait for Course Facilitator feedback on submitted work before proceeding in the course to ensure that their work aligns with expectations and to allow time for revisions, if needed. We therefore discourage students from submitting multiple items for feedback at once. Students who submit multiple items in the same day can expect to receive feedback on the first submission within 3 business days, exclusive of holidays. Remaining work will be evaluated in order of submission with an adjusted timeline. For example, if a student submits 3 written assignments on Tuesday, the student should expect to receive feedback on the first assignment on or before midnight on Friday, on the second assignment 3 business days after that, and on the third assignment 3 business days after that. Please note that opportunities for revision are at the discretion of the Course Facilitator.

Grade Appeals Policy: Students who wish to appeal an assignment, quiz, exam, or any other grade should follow the IL grade appeals policy:

1. Email a written statement, outlining your appeal and addressed to your Course Facilitator who assigned the grade, to our Student Services team at il@uwex.edu. If a disputed grade is the result of a clerical or computational error, the Program Manager of IL at UW-Extension may adjust the grade under appeal after consultation with the Academic Coordinator of the department responsible for facilitating your course. If the appeal falls outside of clerical or computational error, your Course Facilitator will respond to your appeal in writing (attached to an email) within 3 business days, exclusive of holidays.
2. If you are not satisfied with your Course Facilitator's response to your appeal, you may email a written statement of appeal to the Program Manager of IL at UW-Extension at il@uwex.edu. The Program Manager will refer the matter to a hearing committee, appointed by UW-Extension's Dean of Continuing Education, Outreach and E-Learning, as well as the academic dean of the UW institution having major responsibility for the IL course in question.
3. The hearing committee will request relevant information from the Course Facilitator in response to your appeal, including the grading criteria used. The hearing committee will then forward its decision, which will be final, to UW-Extension's Dean of Continuing Education, Outreach and E-Learning (or designee), who will share the decision with the Program Manager of IL and the Academic Coordinator of the department responsible for facilitation of your course. The Program Manager of IL will notify you of the final decision.

Course Pacing Statement: All IL courses offered by UW-Extension follow an asynchronous, self-paced model that affords students flexibility to enroll in courses at any time outside of traditional academic calendars and set their own learning schedule upon enrollment. Students have 12 months* from their course registration processing date to complete their course, with an option to extend in 3-month intervals up to a total of 18 months with approval and associated fees.

**Concurrently enrolled high school students who are taking an IL course to both meet a high school requirement and gain college credit or who are enrolled through Wisconsin's Youth Options program have a set deadline for course completion (typically 3 months).*

Course Pacing Recommendations: This course includes a pacing guide to support course completion within 3 months. Similar to a traditional on-campus course, each credit hour of an IL course correlates with class hours. Students are expected to put in 2 to 3 hours of work on the course per week for every class hour. For example, a 3-credit IL course would correspond to 9 to 12 hours per week over a 3-month period (3 hours of class time plus 6 to 9 hours of additional study time per week). Similarly, a 4-credit IL course would correspond to 12 to 16 hours per week over a 3-month period (4 hours of class time plus 8 to 12 hours of additional study time per week). Students aiming to complete this course at a slower pace can adjust the pacing guide accordingly (e.g., adjusting the weekly



effort from 9 hours per week to 6 hours per week). Students aiming to complete this course at a quicker pace than the minimum course pace listed below must seek prior approval by submitting a written request to our Student Services team at il@uwex.edu. The Student Services team will collaborate with your Course Facilitator and respond to you within 3 business days with an approval or denial of your request, including next steps for you to follow.

- Minimum Course Pace: 3 months
- Maximum Course Pace: 18 months (includes two approved extensions and associated fees)

Course Sequence Policy: The Course Author(s) strategically designed this course to maximize student learning in alignment with course objectives. As such, students are strongly encouraged to proceed through the course and complete all requirements following the sequence in which they are presented. Course Facilitators will evaluate only those course requirements completed and submitted by the student.



Any skipped course requirement will earn a point value of 0 unless the student secures pre-approval from the Course Facilitator to complete the course requirement out of sequence.

For example, if a student skips a required course assignment from Module 4 and moves on to submit the next required course assignment from Module 5, the student earns a grade on the Module 5 assignment and earns a 0 on the Module 4 assignment.

Exam Policy: This course does not have any required exams.

Final Grade Policy: Students may request and, upon approval, pay for extensions in 3-month intervals up to a total of 18 months from their original date of registration to secure additional time to complete outstanding course requirements. When an extension is granted, Course Facilitators will calculate final grades for these students upon expiration of the 15- or 18-month window or upon completion of the course, whichever happens first.



All students who enroll in an IL course and who do *not* submit a written request to our Student Services team for a withdrawal or for a transfer to another IL course during their initial 12-month period after registration will earn a final course grade based on all submitted course requirements.

Accessibility Statement: Students with documented disabilities have the right to request information and necessary accommodations from the University as stipulated in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and in the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students interested in requesting academic accommodations must contact our Student Services team at il@uwex.edu or 1-877-UW-LEARN (895-3276) to begin the application process. Please be advised that the eligibility determination process and, upon approval, implementation of accommodations could take several weeks. It is important for students to be proactive and initiate the process early in order to ensure that accommodations are in place by the time they will be needed.

Academic Integrity Statement: Academic integrity is critical to the mission of the UW-Extension and the IL program. Students are expected to be independently familiar with [University of Wisconsin System's Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures](#) and to recognize that their work in the course is to be their own original work that truthfully represents the time and effort applied. Violations are most serious and will be handled in a manner that fully represents the extent of the law and that suits the seriousness of its violation.