

91869: Conflict Resolution

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Class Meeting Time: Meeting the last two weeks - TBD

Class Zoom:

Course Description

Conflict is an inherent part of our social experience and present at all levels of our interactions, from intra- and interpersonal to intergroup and international. It can be simple and easily addressed or long lasting and complex. It can be destructive or spur our creativity. We experience conflict daily in our personal and professional lives: in our families, communities, organizations, and across international boundaries. This course introduces concepts and theories to create a foundational understanding of the sources of conflict, analyze conflict situations, and identify approaches and strategies that shift conflict from destructive to constructive processes. Through this material you will build a foundation of conflict theories and frameworks rooted in social psychology, law, political science, social work, and business; explore and build awareness of your personal perspectives about conflict and conflict resolution; and learn to appropriately select and apply theories and concepts to analyze a conflict. The course will challenge you to develop self-awareness around your biases and perspectives through readings, lectures, group discussions and critical reflections.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Explore multiple frameworks aimed at deepening our understanding of conflict
2. Appreciate the connection between understanding conflict and finding meaningful resolutions that address the needs of both parties
3. Recognize the need for conflict transformation as a means of changing conflict dynamics and moving towards a positive future

Learning Goals:

1. Develop skills for transforming conflicts in our own lives
2. Practice listening, assertion, and conflict resolution skills
3. Explore the importance of creativity and imagination in facilitating positive social change—individually and globally
4. Develop and refine competencies in communication, critical thinking, group collaboration, global understanding, and well-being

Accommodations: Students gain access to academic learning in a variety of ways and Heinz College is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform me early in the term if you have a disability or other conditions that might require accommodations or modification of any of these course procedures. You may speak with me after class or during office hours. If you require additional accommodations, please contact our [Office of Disability Resources](#) at 412-268-6121 for support and direction. If you have an accommodations letter from the Disability Resources office, I encourage you to discuss your accommodations and needs with me as early in the semester as possible. I will work with you to ensure that accommodations are provided as appropriate.

Readings

All readings are available on the Canvas course site.

The graduate school expectation is reading for overall argument and illustrative examples, not memorization of the entire text.

Evaluation

- I. Discussion Recordings (20 points x4):** You've been assigned to groups of 3-4 on canvas. In your groups, you will be meeting on zoom weekly to respond to prompts and questions that are asked in the class lecture recording aligned with that week. These meetings will be recorded and submitted. This needs to be a thoughtful and engaged discussion and response to the prompts, and is an exercise in engaging in discourse and dialogue meant to replicate an in-class experience. As such, cameras must be on.
 - Submit only one recording per group.
 - Grades will be assigned on an individual basis. You will be graded on;
 - Engagement with peers
 - Clarity of communication
 - Respectful dialogue
 - Demonstrated interest and curiosity
 - I'm looking for depthful conversations and am reluctant to assign a time limit - think quality not quantity!
 - Recordings are due **9pm on Sundays.**
- II. Theory of Implicit Conflict and Change (20 points):** In this paper, you are asked to engage in a systematic and critical reflection of your *implicit* conflict style; ie. the conflict style you've passively engaged in your entire life. This paper will be 3-4 pages long (double spaced, 12pt font, Times New Roman). Things to consider including in your paper:
 - What is your relationship with conflict?
 - How do you engage in conflict?
 - Does it differ across settings/people?
 - How is your conflict style informed by your culture, community, family and relationships?
 - Has your conflict style evolved throughout your life? If so, how and in what way?
- III. Theory of Explicit Conflict and Change (20 points):** In this paper, you are asked to engage in a systematic and critical reflection of your *explicit* conflict style; ie. the conflict style you're adapting based on what you've learned in this class. Address the following question: "*How have*

the ideas, models, theories and methods from the course challenged, expanded or bolstered your theory of conflict and change?" Be specific about how your thinking has changed over the term, referring back to your initial implicit theory. Employ and cite as broad a range of the ideas and models from the course as possible, and include a synthesis of how this change in your thinking will likely affect your practice. This paper will be 5 pages long (double spaced, 12pt font, Times New Roman).

- IV. Conflict Resolution Worksheet (20 points each):** For this assignment, you will identify one recent conflict that you've had to navigate. This must be a conflict that's happened within the past month (the more recent, the better). You will complete the worksheet (found on canvas) that is designed to help you utilize frameworks we've discussed in class to think about the conflict from multiple angles, understand and process your emotions about it, and effectively communicate your concerns to help reach a resolution.
- I. Skills Practice (10 points):** You will all be required to complete a skills practice role play in the last two weeks of class. These role plays will happen in real time on zoom. You will be assigned a conflict and provide a scenario. Points for this assignment will not be awarded based on skill, but based on attendance and completion of the roleplay.

Class Schedule

Session	Dates	Reading, Assignments, and Activities
1	Week 1	<p>Introductions & Syllabus Review</p> <p>Watch: Recording #1: Introduction Recording #2 : Power, Identity, Culture</p> <p>Reading Due: Deutsch, M. - Cooperation and competition. (Ch 1)</p> <p>Assignment Due: Discussion Recording - 06/30</p>
2	Week 2	<p>Culture & Conflict</p> <p>Watch: Recording #3: Constructive controversy & groups Recording #4: Cultural fluency</p> <p>Reading Due: Coleman, P. T. and Ferguson, R. (2014). <i>Making Conflict Work: Harnessing the Power of Disagreement</i>. New York: Houghton-Mifflin-Harcourt. (Ch. 1, 2)</p>

		<p>Johnson et al. - Constructive Controversy: The Value of Intellectual Opposition. (Ch. 4)</p> <p>LeBaron, M. L. - The Alchemy of Change: Cultural Fluency in Conflict Resolution. (Ch. 25)</p> <p>Tjosvold, Leund & Johnson - Cooperative & Competitive Conflict in China. (Ch. 28)</p> <p>Assignment Due: Theory of Implicit Change Paper - 07/07 Discussion Recording - 07/07</p>
3	Week 3	<p>Injustice & Oppression</p> <p>Watch: Recording #5: Justice & Conflict</p> <p>Reading Due: Deutsh, M. - Justice & Conflict. (Ch. 2)</p> <p>Fine, M. & Halkovic, A. - A Delicate and Deliberate Journey Toward Justice: Challenging Privilege/Building Structures of Solidarity. (Ch. 3)</p> <p>Assignment Due: Discussion Recording - 07/14</p>
4	Week 4	<p>Variables Impacting Resolution</p> <p>Watch: Recording #6: Resolution Recording #7: Skills</p> <p>Reading Due: Thompson & Lucas. - Judgemental Biases in Conflict Resolution & How to Overcome Them (Ch. 11)</p> <p>Lindner - Why it is important to understand how emotions affect conflict and how conflict affects emotions (Ch. 12)</p> <p>Sandy, Boardmen & Deutsch - Personality & Conflict (Ch. 17)</p> <p>Mischel, DeSmet & Kross - Self-Regulation in the Service of Conflict Resolution (Ch. 13)</p> <p>Fisher-Yoshida - Creating Constructive Communication Through Dialogue (Ch. 36)</p>

		Assignment Due: Conflict Resolution Worksheet - 07/21 Discussion Recording - 07/21
5	Week 5	Skills Practice Meeting on Zoom
6	Week 6	Skills Practice Meeting on Zoom Assignment Due: Theory of Change paper - 08/02