

# The University of Oklahoma

## College of Continuing Education

### Advanced Programs – Course Syllabus

#### Course Title:

Conflict Resolution

#### Course Number:

HR 5343 - 492

#### Course Description:

You've heard it before...conflict is a natural part of human interaction. It's true! Many people view conflict as difficult, counterproductive, scary, and something to avoid. A few seem to need to be constantly engaged in conflict...to keep things "stirred up." One of the most disturbing things about conflict is the way it can damage our relationships. On the other hand, conflict can be developmental by deepening our understanding of self and others, and it can serve as a catalyst for creative problem solving and a positive force for change. What accounts for the disparity? How can we approach conflict more productively? Why does it matter?

Conflict resolution is about much more than a set of tactics or procedures. The way we think about it and our attitudes toward it influence the way we handle it, and those are things we can change. As we develop deeper ways of thinking about conflict, we begin to find more productive, positive ways of resolving it as well. Functional conflict resolution has the potential to affect individuals, groups, communities, and nations in the following ways:

- By reducing the level and severity of conflict
- By fostering a deeper understanding of self, and greater appreciation for others
- By creating conditions that support meaningful dialogue, improve the overall quality of interactions, and increase the likelihood of positive and more enduring outcomes.
- By supporting individual empowerment, strengthening community, and advancing social justice.

#### Course Dates:

May 1 – August 31, 2017

Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: April 2, 2017

#### Site Director:

This is a three-credit hour online course. Please see your local Site Director or e-mail our online site coordinator at [aponline@ou.edu](mailto:aponline@ou.edu)

#### Professor Contact Information:

Course Professor: Kay Ham, MHR

Mailing Address: 504 Clearview Dr.  
Norman, OK 73072

Telephone Number: (405)321-6928 (daytime Central Time please)

E-mail Address: [kay.ham@ou.edu](mailto:kay.ham@ou.edu)

Virtual Office Hours: You may email me any time and I will respond as soon as I can. If you would like to speak with me directly, you may phone during daytime hours (leave a message if I do not answer). If you need to meet in person (in Norman) on a course-related matter, please email or call to make arrangements.

Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students during the above listed Virtual Office Hours and other methods by arrangement.

### **Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:**

Student materials are available at the OU Follett Bookstore located at 1185 Asp Avenue; Norman, OK, and can be ordered online, by phone, by email, or by fax. Ordering online at <http://www.bkstr.com/oklahomastore/home> is strongly recommended – students can track the status of their order within 48 hours. If an order has not been shipped within three days, students can contact the Follett textbook manager by phone (405) 325-3511, (800) 522-0772 (toll-free) or email [0831mgr@fheg.follett.com](mailto:0831mgr@fheg.follett.com). Phone orders (ask for the textbook manager and identify yourself as an Advanced Programs student) can be placed 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday; 10 a.m. to 4p.m. on Saturday (CST). Summer hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (CST). Fax orders can be placed 24 hours a day at (405) 325-7770. Text prices are available online.

1. Doblmeier, M. (Producer/Director). (2007). *The power of forgiveness* [DVD]. United States: Journey Films (This DVD may be available on YouTube. Not provided by Advanced Programs or the bookstore.)
2. Fisher, R., Ury, W., & Patton, B. (2011). *Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Penguin Books. ISBN 9780143118756.
3. Mayer, B. (2012). *The dynamics of conflict: A guide to engagement and intervention* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. ISBN 9780470613535.
4. Materials posted on the OU Canvas learning management system: Access Canvas at <https://oklahoma.instructure.com/>, enter your OU NetID and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

Note: Follett is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through Follett.

### **Canvas:**

You will find all explanations, instructions, schedules, and assignment details related to this course on Canvas on the first day of class.

### **OU E-Mail:**

All official correspondence from distance learning instructors will be sent only to students' ou.edu address.

### **Online Orientation:**

The College of Arts and Sciences offers an online orientation for students who are enrolled in online or blended courses. The purpose of the orientation is to ensure that students are well prepared both technically and practically to take online courses. The orientation can be found on their website at:

<http://www.ou.edu/content/cas/online/student-online-orientation.html>

The College of Arts and Sciences Online and Academic Technology Services office is here to assist you with any questions, problems, or concerns you may have. For assistance visit their website at

<http://www.ou.edu/content/cas/online/student-information.html> or contact them by telephone at: (405) 325-5854 or email: [casonline@ou.edu](mailto:casonline@ou.edu)

### **Course Overview:**

In this course we will examine the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of conflict and resolution, with emphasis on the relevance and application of principles to real situations we all face. Our studies will include, but are not limited to: understanding the nature of conflict and the factors that underlie and contribute to escalation; functional and dysfunctional behaviors; the influence of strong emotions, values, cultural and religious differences; biases, attitudes, and personalities; effects of stress; power; justice; trust; constructive communication; third party involvement; principled negotiation; apology forgiveness, peace, and reconciliation. Emphasis is placed on self-awareness and understanding of the "Other," and on developing attitudes, perspectives, and skills conducive to more integrative, cooperative resolution processes.

## **Instructional Strategies:**

We will use textbooks, video, class discussion, supplemental reading and activities, self-assessment, written assignments, and our own experiences to accomplish our objectives. Since we won't be able to meet in person to discuss ideas, the "Corner Bistro" (discussion forum) will serve as our virtual classroom.

## **Course Objectives:**

By the end of the course, you should be able to demonstrate your understanding of:

- The general nature and dimensions of conflict and resolution
- Common sources and underlying factors and their influence
- The significance of stress, emotions, values, beliefs, culture, personality, attitudes, biases
- The effects of power and culture
- Your personal styles of conflict-related behaviors
- The concepts of empowerment, advocacy, and social justice
- The roles of third parties in prevention and resolution
- Conflict transformation, and the elements of functional communication
- Principles of interest-based negotiation
- Aftermath, including the ideas of apology, forgiveness, peacemaking, and reconciliation

## **Course Outline:**

This will be an integrative approach to the subject matter, and is subject to modification to meet class needs.

## **Introduction**

### **Units 1 and 2:**

We will explore the nature of conflict and its cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions, including types (interpersonal, intrapersonal, intergroup, intragroup, intractable) and major contexts (personal/family, workplace, regional, global). We will examine the ways in which people engage in conflict, the dynamics of interactions, and identify our own individual styles. We will study sources and exacerbating factors (e.g. strong emotions, beliefs, values, culture, personalities, attitudes, etc.) We will examine power and the relationship between empowerment and justice. There will be emphasis on self-examination and reflection, developing a deeper understanding of the "Other" and on why this understanding is essential to functional, productive conflict dynamics.

### **Units 3 and 4:**

Integrating what we have learned about the nature of conflict, the primary focus during this time will be on the nature and dimensions of resolution. We will examine what "resolution" means. We will explore processes (e.g. negotiation) through which parties in conflict may arrive at some mutually acceptable resolution of their differences. We will examine the essential elements of communication in some detail, and how healthy dialogue processes can transform the quality of our interactions and lead to better, and more lasting, outcomes. We will discuss the role of third parties, whether formal (mediation, arbitration) or informal (families, friends, communities, etc.,) and we will discuss how empowerment of people leads to social change. We will deliberate on the ideas of forgiveness, apology, peacemaking, and reconciliation, and examine ways in which the application of these principles can help prevent or reduce the level and intensity of conflict in our lives and those of the next generation.

## **Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:**

**Detailed explanations and instructions for all assignments will be located in the "content" section of Canvas on the date the course begins. Each assignment will be submitted to the designated drop box or discussion forum (corner bistro).**

## Grading:

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F.

Assignment	Due Date	Percent of Grade
Topic for research paper	May 14	0
Unit 1 Essay	May 28	10
News analysis	June 11	10
Personal Journal	June 25	10
Communication Commentary	July 9	15
The Method paper	July 23	15
Forgiveness Commentary	August 6	10
Final Paper	August 13	20
Discussion Forum	Ongoing	10
Total	n/a	100

**Notice:** Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.

### Policy for Late Work:

Please contact the professor regarding his/her policy for late work

### Attendance Policy:

In addition to interaction via Canvas and E-mail contact, students are required to contact the instructor via E-mail or telephone **before** the beginning of the course term for an initial briefing. Although physical class meetings are not part of this course, participation in all interactive, learning activities is required.

**Note: Students who experience difficulty with meeting the due dates or other course requirements due to personal, professional, military, or other valid reasons need to contact the instructor or their advisor asap.**

Student assignments and student/instructor communications will be conducted via Canvas, although students may contact the instructor via telephone, postal mail, e-mail, or fax as needed

### Incomplete Grade Policy:

A grade of "I" is not automatically assigned, but rather must be requested by the student by submitting to the instructor a "Petition for and Work to Remove an Incompleted Grade" form. An "I" can never be used in lieu of an "F" nor can an "I" be assigned because of excessive failure to participate in class activities.

### Technical Support Information:

If you experience technical problems, contact Information Technology by visiting their website at: <http://webapps.ou.edu/it/> or contacting them by telephone at: (405) 325-HELP (4357).

### Procedures for Completion of Course Evaluation:

Upon completion of the course students should go to the [Advanced Programs Online Learning Information webpage](#) and click on the applicable semester link under "Online Course Evaluation" which will direct them to the evaluation. The evaluation will take approximately five minutes to complete. Completion of the online evaluation is an important tool allowing Advanced Programs to gain information and student feedback for improvement of courses.

Your responses will be kept confidential. They will be reviewed by the department and only supplied to the professor once grades for the course have been submitted.

## **POLICIES AND NOTICES**

### **Attendance/Grade Policy**

**Note:** Attendance/absences do not apply to online courses. However, participation in all course activities is extremely important to student success in online courses.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution's policy regarding "I" (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy. Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any "I" (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on "financial aid probation." If the "I" grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student's Financial Aid may be suspended making the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

### **Academic Integrity and Student Conduct**

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Academic assignments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore all work and all grades should result from the student's own understanding and effort.

Academic misconduct is any act which improperly affects the evaluation of a student's academic performance or achievement. Misconduct occurs when the student either knows or reasonably should know that the act constitutes misconduct. Academic misconduct includes: cheating and using unauthorized materials on examinations and other assignments; improper collaboration, submitting the same assignment for different classes (self-plagiarism); fabrication, forgery, alteration of documents, lying, etc...in order to obtain an academic advantage; assisting others in academic misconduct; attempting to commit academic misconduct; destruction of property, hacking, etc...; intimidation and interference with integrity process; and plagiarism. All students should review the Student's Guide to Academic Integrity at [http://integrity.ou.edu/students\\_guide.html](http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html)

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. All students should review policies regarding student conduct at <http://studentconduct.ou.edu/>

### **Accommodation Statement**

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local OU Site Director.

### **Adjustment for Pregnancy/Childbirth-Related Issues**

Should you need modifications or adjustments to your course requirements because of documented pregnancy-related or childbirth-related issues, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss. Generally, modifications will be made where medically necessary and similar in scope to accommodations based on temporary disability. Please see <http://www.ou.edu/content/eoo/faqs/pregnancy-faqs.html>.

### **Title IX Resources**

For any concerns regarding gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking, or intimate partner violence, the University offers a variety of resources, including advocates on-call 24/7, counseling services, mutual no-contact orders, scheduling adjustments, and disciplinary sanctions against the perpetrator. Please contact the Sexual Misconduct Office at [smo@ou.edu](mailto:smo@ou.edu) or (405) 325-2215 (8-5), or the Sexual Assault Response Team at (405) 615 -0013 (24/7) to report an incident. To learn more about Title IX, please visit the Institutional Equity Office's website at <http://www.ou.edu/content/eoo.html>

### **Course Policies**

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course.

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: <http://www.goou.ou.edu/>

## **INSTRUCTOR VITA**

**Kay Ham, MHR**

### **Education**

- Certification in Civil, Commercial, and Family Mediation, the Mediation Institute
- Master of Human Relations, University of Oklahoma
- Bachelor of Science in Education, University of Oklahoma

### **Current Positions**

- Adjunct Faculty, Department of Human Relations since 2005
- Advanced Programs Professor since 2008
- Consultant and Mediator, private practice working with governmental, non-profit, and other organizations.

### **Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses**

- Conflict Resolution
- Organizational Behavior
- Introduction to Graduate Studies in Human Relations
- Creative Problem Solving

### **Publication:**

Co-author of book chapters for the Jossey-Bass *Handbook of Human Resource Management in Government* (2005 and 2010 editions)

### **Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest**

- Use of dialogue in conflict resolution
- Forgiveness and reconciliation
- Human interaction in organizations
- Effects of stress in organizations

### **Major Professional Affiliations**

- Association for Conflict Resolution
- Oklahoma Association of Mediators and Arbitrators
- Association for Talent Development (formerly American Society for Training and Development)
- Moderator, National Issues Forums

### **Relevant Community Engagement:**

- Chair, City of Norman Human Rights Commission
- Board of Trustees, The Xenia Institute for Social Justice
- Reading and ESL tutor, Norman Public Library