Southern Methodist University
5228 Tennyson Parkway, Plano TX 75024

COURSE SYLLABUS

Psychology of Conflict

HDDR 6319 & HDCN 6382

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"Ultimately, the only power to which man should aspire is that which he exercises over himself."

- ***Elie Wiesel***

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Speak slowly, concisely, and be brief.

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This course syllabus is intended as a set of guidelines for Advanced General Psychology. Both Southern Methodist University and your instructor reserve the right to make modifications in content, schedule, and requirements as necessary to promote the best education possible within prevailing conditions affecting this course. Retain for personal files. This syllabus may be needed for future course reference.

Course Information

Course Title: Psychology of Conflict, HDDR 6319 & HDCN 6382
Class Meeting Time: Thursdays, 6:00pm – 10:15pm
Credit Hours: 3
Course Description: This course will examine the psychological dynamics associated with the process and consequences of conflict. We will ask how people understand, explain and respond to the various conflicts that comprise their reality: internal, interpersonal and inter-group struggles. Cognitive, affective and motivational processes will be presented and discussed in the context of different philosophical and scientific explanations. We will explore the moral, political and cultural dimensions of conflict as they shape the identity of individuals and groups.
Course Prerequisites: None.

My Approach

My philosophy is to create a shared learning experience with mutuality of learning among all course participants. I envision our class to be a forum for sharing experiences, trying new ideas, engaging in self-reflection and applying theories while cultivating our capacity to learn. This combination of techniques is known to be the most effective approach to adult learning. We will learn about psychology through readings, exercises, role-plays, reflection and integration.

We begin this course with Parker J. Palmer's observation that "*good teaching isn't about technique. I've asked students around the country to describe their good teachers to me. Some of them describe people who lecture all the time, some of them describe people who do little more than facilitate group processes, and others describe everything in between. But all of them describe people who have some sort of* <u>*connective capacity*</u>*, who connect themselves to their students, their students to each other, and everyone to the subjects being studied."* In the spirit of connection, we begin. *–Dr. Picchioni*

Required Textbooks and Material

1. Styles Profile- $20 pickup and pay first class meeting
2. *Interpersonal Conflict (8th Ed.)* – Wilmot & Hocker, ISBN 13: **978-0073385136**
3. *Being Complex Without Having a Complex* - Picchioni, ISBN: 1451274971

Recommended but not Required Text

1. *The Emotional Life of Your Brain*, Richard J. Davison, ISBN-13: 9781594630897
2. *The Brain Advantage*, Madeline L. Van Hecke, ISBN-13: 9781591027645
3. *Why We Make Mistakes, How We Look without Seeing, Forget Things in Seconds, and Are All Pretty Sure We Are Way Above Average*, Joseph T. Hallinan, ISBN: 0767928059
4. *Mistakes Were Made, But Not By Me*- Travis & Aronson, ISBN-13: 9780151010981
5. *Mirroring People Mirroring People: The New Science of How We Connect with Others*- Iacoboni, ISBN-13: 978037421075
6. *The Republic of Choice*: *Law, Authority and Culture*- Lawrence M. Friedman, ISBN-13: 9780674762619
7. *Predictably Irrational*: *The Hidden Forces that Shape Our Decisions*- Dan Ariely, ISBN-13: 9780061854545
8. *How We Decide*- Jonah Lehrer, ISBN-13: 9780618620111
9. *Influence*: *Science and Practice*- Robert B. Cialdini, ISBN-13: 9780205609994
10. *Emotional Intelligence*- Daniel Goleman, ISBN-13: 9780553383713
11. *Social Intelligence*- Daniel Goleman, ISBN-13: 9780553384499
12. *Justice*: *What's the Right Thing to Do?* – Michael J. Sandel, ISBN-13: 9780374180652
13. *Cannibals and Kings*: *Origins of Cultures* – Marvin Harris, ISBN-13: 9780679728498
14. *The Age of Empathy*: *Nature's Lessons for a Kinder Society*- Frans De Waal, ISBN-13: 9780307407764
15. *The Protean Self: Human Resilience in an Age of Fragmentation*- Robert Jay Lifton, ISBN-13: 9780226480985
16. *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a world of Strangers*- Kwame Anthony Appiah, ISBN-13: 9780393329339
17. *Sway, the Irresistible Pull of Irrational Behavior*- Rom Brafman & Ori Brauman, ISBN-13: 9780385530606
18. *Origins of Virtue*, Matt Ridley, ISBN-13: 9780140264456

Exam credit will be given if students choose to read and write a brief reflection paper (see Dr. Picchioni for details).

Pre-assignment Section
Wilmot-Hocker Chapters 1-8

Course Objectives

1. Students will learn concept and dimensions of conflict, including their own style.
2. Students will learn to diagnose, analyze, and be strategic in the response to conflict.
3. Students will learn to synthesize material, discuss theories, and show mastery of concepts.
4. Students will learn to distinguish between constructive and destructive conflict.
5. Students will come to identify the elements that make up intractable conflict.

Specific Course Learning Outcomes

1. Students will identify their own conflict style including strengths and weaknesses.
2. Students will have tools and knowledge to diagnose, analyze and be strategic in response to conflict.
3. Students will gain insight to their own and other's perceptions on conflict.
4. Students will acquire tools/ technique to manage conflict.
5. Students will apply knowledge, insight, and tools/ techniques in group discussions and assigned papers.

Assignments

Both the short and major paper will be due at the end of the second weekend.

EVALUATION GUIDELINES

1. **Short Paper- 30%**
   Using the tool "Measuring Your Conflict Style" in Wilmot & Hocker, write a description of your conflict style in personal and/ or public settings. Use as data what others say about your style and what you think about your style. Give the "Measuring Your Conflict Style" to three people who know you well enough to account for your own and others' perceptions of your style. One of those persons should also know your style through personal experience. **Your paper must address the following issues**:
   a. Positive and negative features of your style
   b. How flexible you are in choice of style (cite examples)
   c. Where you learned your style (family of origin)
   d. Differences between your own (self-reflection) and others' (external) perceptions of your style
   e. What your style triggers in others

   The paper is to be 5 pages, typed and double-spaced, and is due on the 6th class session. Within the paper be sure to **include the four scores** (yours, plus the three others).

2. **Major Paper- 50%**
   Using the Wilmot-Hocker "Conflict Assessment Guide" and the "Styles Profile," write a paper focusing on a personal conflict you have with another person; the conflict can be past or ongoing. The paper will be returned provided a self-addressed stamped envelope accompanies the paper when the paper is submitted. The purposes of this assignment:
   a. Self-reflection and personal growth

b. Application of key conflict analytical concepts
c. Use of the material in the texts and class notes

The paper is to be 10 pages, typed and double-spaced, and is due on the 9th class session.

Written Assignment Guidelines

	100-90	**89-83**	**82- Below**
Depth of Thought and Analysis 20%	Paper is constructed in a logical and coherent fashion. Conclusions flow from a well-executed plan, in succinct and meaningful statements.	Topic is started clearly. Remarks show a degree of analysis. Some areas of the paper lack supporting and rational support.	Topic is vague and under developed. Paper lacks the level of effort for original graduate work.
Synthesis and Congruency 20%	Paper is well integrated and flows as one complete narrative. Paper flows from general ideas to specific conclusions.	Sections of the paper connect, however, not all sections or paragraphs fall in a natural or logical order.	The paper appears to have no direction, with subtopics appearing disjointed.
Thoroughness 20%	The appropriate content is covered in depth without being redundant.	Essential material is not covered to the degree to explain the topic thoroughly.	Major sections are omitted, glossed over, or unnecessarily repeated.
Personalization 20%	Personal history is appropriately integrated into the narrative.	There is some attempt on the writer' part to utilize personal examples within the content.	Little to no personal history appears in the paper.
Clarity of Writing and Mechanics 20%	Writing is crisp, clear, and succinct. No spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors are made.	Unnecessary words and ambiguous statements are made. Meaning is unclear in parts of the paper. Some spelling and grammar errors are made.	It is hard to know what the writer is trying to express. Writing is convoluted. Misspelled words, incorrect grammar, and improper punctuation are frequent.

3. **Participation and Groups- 20%**
   Group Instructions: You are to create a team with 4-6 people. Meet as a group, 5 times, for 90 minutes each session. During your meetings, discuss a specific class topic of your choosing. Collectively, write a 2 page paper. Everyone on the team should sign the paper and one copy should be turned in. The paper should identify the major topics of discussion, insights, and any subjects of personal growth.

Evaluation of Class Participation & Reading Assignments

	Needs Improvement 80-83	**Developing 84-89**	**Accomplished 90-93**	**Exemplary 94-100**	**Score**
Preparation for class/ class discussion/ writing assignments	Does not ask questions or make comments that indicate familiarity with topics for class; turns in most writing assignments	Rarely asks questions or makes comments that indicate familiarity with the topics prepared for class; turns in all writing assignments	Occasionally asks questions or makes observations that indicate reflections some knowledge or readings for class; turns in all writing assignments	Regularly asks questions or makes observations that indicate reflection, knowledge or readings for class; turn in all writing assignments	
Small group participation	Does not participate in small groups in class	Does not actively participate in small groups in class	Participates actively in small groups in class	Participates actively and provides leadership in small groups in class	
Class absences	Misses class often	Misses no more than 2 classes w/o prior arrangement	Misses 1 class with prior arrangement	Attends class regularly (no missed classes)	

Grading Scale

94-100 = A Exceptional	A superior / outstanding performance. Has mastered the concepts and adds unique contributes to class discussions.
90-93 = A- Excellent	A very good / admirable performance. Displays understanding in all areas of the class, and contributes successfully to class discussions.
87-89 = B+ Outstanding	Above average performance. A few insignificant flaws may appear, but overall has great application of the field.
84-86 = B Good	A generally satisfactory, intellectually adequate performance. Few significant flaws in performance.
80-83 = B- Adequate	A barely satisfactory performance. Contributes little to class discussions and lacks a clear understanding of concepts.
77-79 = C+ Not sufficient	An unacceptable performance. Unable to engage in class discussions and has little comprehension of theories.

Course/Department Disciplinary Policies

Late Paper/Assignment Policy: Late papers are accepted only by pre-arrangement with the instructor.

Student Responsibilities: Be prepared, attend class and engage in class discussions and activities. Turn in all assignments on time.

Class Decorum: Be respectful. Be punctual, as class will begin on time. Breaks will be given; students must return promptly. ***Cell phones must be turned off during class.*** Be prepared to participate. Counseling is an interactive profession; professional respect and courtesy is expected at all times. Do not engage in side discussions during class, as this distracts the instructor and your fellow students.

Attendance Policy: Roll will be taken for each session, and attendance is mandatory. One absence will reduce your final grade by 5%, due to the abbreviated schedule. Two or more absences will necessitate a conference with the instructor.

Institutional Policies

Honor Code

Students are reminded of the SMU Honor Code as referenced in the Student Handbook. Intellectual integrity and academic honesty are both the foundations and the goals for this program. Please reference and review the university policies on the responsibilities, policies and penalties regarding academic honesty. http://www.smu.edu/studentlife/PCL_05_HC.asp

Notification of Absence Due to Religious Holy Day(s)

Students who will be absent from class for the observance of a religious holiday must notify the instructor in advance. Please refer to the Student Obligations section of the university catalog for more explanations. You are required to complete any assignments or take any examinations missed as a result of the absence within the time frame specified by your instructor.

Disability Accommodations

Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) at 214-768-1470 or www.smu.edu/alec/dass.asp to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. They should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements. (See University Policy No. 2.4; an attachment describes the DASS procedures and relocated office.)

Add/Drop Policy

If you are unable to complete this course, you must officially withdraw by the university deadline; the last day to add/drop regular courses without a grade record or billing. Withdrawing is a formal procedure which you must initiate; your instructor cannot do it for you.

Grade of Incomplete

A student may receive a grade of I (Incomplete) if at least 50 percent of the course requirements have been completed with passing grades, but for some justifiable reason, acceptable to the instructor, the student has been unable to complete the full requirements of the course. At the time a grade of I is given, the instructor must

stipulate in writing to the student and to the University registrar the requirements and completion date that are to be met and the grade that will be given if the requirements are not met by the completion date. The maximum period of time allowed to clear the Incomplete grade normally is 12 months. If the Incomplete grade is not cleared by the date set by the instructor or by the end of the 12-month Policies and Procedures 25 deadline, the grade of I will be changed to the grade provided by the instructor at the time the Incomplete grade was assigned or to a grade of F if no alternate grade was provided. The grade of I is not given in lieu of a grade of F or W, or other grade, each of which is prescribed for other specific circumstances.

If the student's work is incomplete, poor quality and not acceptable, a grade of F will be given. The grade of I does not authorize a student to attend the course during a later term. Graduation candidates must clear all Incomplete grades prior to the deadline in the Official University Calendar, which may allow less time than 12 months. Failure to do so can result in removal from the degree candidacy list and/or conversion of the grade of I to the grade indicated by the instructor at the time the grade of I was given.

For graduate students, a maximum of two (six hours) concurrently held grades of Incomplete in courses other than thesis is allowed. If this maximum is reached, the student will be allowed to take only one three-hour course per term until the Incomplete total is reduced. Students who accumulate a total of three grades of Incomplete in courses other than thesis will be put on probation and not allowed to enroll further until the total is reduced.

Financial Aid Statement

Students who are receiving any form of financial aid should check with the Financial Aid Office prior to withdrawing from classes. Withdrawals may affect your eligibility to receive further aid and could cause you to be in a position of repayment for the current semester. Students who fail to attend or participate are also subject to this policy. To apply for financial aid at SMU, students must complete the FAFSA (Free Applications for Federal Student Aid) on the web at http://www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Statement on Confidentiality and Emotional Safety

In order to provide a safe learning environment for students in the class and to protect the confidentiality of practice clients and class members, students will discuss case material and other personal information, reactions, etc., only while in class or privately with other current class members. It is the responsibility of each class member to treat classmates with respect and integrity, thus providing emotional safety for each other during class activities. Failure to do so can result in termination from the department.

SMU Policy

Refer to www.smu.edu or the Counseling Program office in Suite 3-224 for questions or information regarding SMU policies and procedures.

"Too often we… enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought."
- John F. Kennedy