

**SPCM 4500: Conflict Resolution**  
**Spring 2015**  
**Scott Jensen**  
**Webster University**

**TEXTBOOKS:**

Wiesenthal, S. (1997). *The sunflower: On possibilities and limits of forgiveness*. New York, NY: Schocken.

Wilmot, W. W., & Hocker, J. L. (2011). *Interpersonal conflict* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND COURSE LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Conflict is a necessary and inherent dimension of our communication, regardless of the context in which we find ourselves. This course provides a comprehensive perspective of conflict, including its causes, manifestations, and outcomes. Major projects will center on students selecting concepts and applications related to conflict and exploring them in both written and oral form. The goal of this course is to provide students with a greater awareness of conflict both within and outside their lives.

1. Students will leave the course understanding the complexity of conflict, as well as its potential responses and related outcomes.
2. Students will be more confident in their approaches to conflict.
3. Students will differentiate between functional and dysfunctional perspectives on conflict.
4. Students will be able to exhibit characteristics of effectiveness and appropriateness as part of being competent conflict managers.
5. Students will understand proximal and distal outcomes and influences on conflict.
6. Students will appreciate the importance of power as a factor in conflict evolution and management.
7. Students will understand the role of conflict in relationships.
8. Students will become aware of how issues of diversity impact conflict management.
9. Students will be able to identify principles of effective mediation and negotiation.
10. Students will appreciate the positive role conflict can play in our daily lives.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**1. Conflict Competence Assessment.** Students will write a case study of an actual conflict in their lives, past or present. The assessment will focus on an application of a competence model of conflict to be discussed in class. (50 points)

**2. Reflection Exercises.** Reflection papers and activities will be assigned throughout the semester. Each assignment will ask for an application and/or reflection on course content. These will include film analyses, discussions of readings, and other similar activities. Some activities will take place during class sessions while others will be assigned as out of class work.

(100 points)

**3. Research Paper and Presentation.** Students will select and research an aspect of conflict they find to be interesting and relevant to their lives. The presentation will crystallize the paper for the class. (200 points)

**4. Celebrations of Knowledge (also known as “tests”). (200 points)**

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:**

<b><u>Week</u></b>	<b><u>Topic and Reading (R)</u></b>
1	Orientation and Introductions What is Conflict and Conflict Competence? <b>R Hocker &amp; Wilmot, 1</b>
2	Conflict Types and Goals <i>Identifying Metaphors and Definitions</i> <b>R Hocker &amp; Wilmot, 2-3</b>
3	Conflict Styles and Tactics <b>R Hocker &amp; Wilmot, 5</b>
4	<i>Televised Reflection Activity</i> Power <b>R Hocker &amp; Wilmot, 4</b>
5	<i>Power Dialogues and Presentations</i> Emotions and Conflict <b>R Hocker &amp; Wilmot, 6</b>
6	Rage <i>Celebration of Knowledge #1</i>
7	Assessment and Resolution Models <b>R Hocker &amp; Wilmot, 7</b>
8	<i>Assessment and Resolution Group Construction and Presentations</i>
9	<i>View Remember the Titans</i>
10	Negotiation <b>R Hocker &amp; Wilmot, 8</b>

- 11 Conflict Intervention  
Introducing Forgiveness  
**R Hocker & Wilmot, 9**
- 12 Forgiveness and Reconciliation  
**R Hocker & Wilmot, 10**
- 13 **Discuss *The Sunflower***  
**R Wiesenthal**
- 14 **Discuss *The Sunflower***  
**R Wiesenthal**
- 15 **View *An Unfinished Life***
- 16 ***Celebration of Knowledge #2***  
***Research Paper Presentations***