Negotiation and Conflict Resolution in Organizations

GBUS 873  Fall 2017

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Office hours: Monday and Wednesday 3 pm – 4 pm and Tuesdays 6pm -7 pm
You can also call or email to arrange a specific appointment outside these times.

Course format

This course is intentionally designed in a blended format. Students will alternate between on-campus classes and on-line sessions which are facilitated in the URCourses platform. In weeks when we are on-line students will be preparing and presenting their own contributions on the URCourses site.

Course description and objective

GBUS 873 will further develop students’ understanding of the nature, origins, and management of conflict commonly found between and within organizations. The course identifies the processes for effective management of conflict in both unionized and non-unionized environments. Sources and types of conflict will be examined using group and individual settings as well as business to business and employer-employee examples. Negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills will be emphasized through classroom practice and individual work outside of class. Students will develop skills in the analysis of conflict, negotiation, arbitration and mediation, the design of conflict resolution systems, and the recommendation of appropriate mechanisms to resolve conflict in a wide range of organization settings.

At the end of the course students should be able to:

- Understand organization dynamics and the theory and nature of conflict in organizations at the individual and group levels
- Apply conceptual frameworks to the diagnosis and assessment of organizational conflict
- Identify and develop appropriate intervention strategies for a variety of conflict settings
- Identify and demonstrate effective use of alternate dispute resolution techniques
- Recommend the design of conflict management systems for organizations

The prerequisite knowledge for success in the course includes a good understanding of micro and macro theory of organization behaviour, as well as knowledge of the range and scope of human resource management practices and the role of unions in the contemporary workplace.
The course incorporates the theoretical, the technical and the personal aspects of learning. Participants will: explore the advances and insights provided by well developed theory and relevant research; reflect on their own experiences and observations of contemporary organizations; and explore and apply established professional approaches to managing conflict in a wide range of situations. The course will provide a rich experience for students willing to put in significant effort to understand and to develop professionally as effective managers in an increasingly complex business environment.

Resources

The set text for the course is:

**Choices in Approaching Conflict: Understanding the practice of alternative dispute resolution**
by Charles Ewert, Gordon Barnard, Jennifer Laffier & Michael Maynard and published in 2010, reprinted in 2015 by Edmond Publications. This text provides a basic overview of Alternate Dispute Resolution, including negotiation and mediation.

A variety of additional readings for each class will be posted on the course website in the URCourses platform. Some of these readings will be required and some will be supplemental readings. Supplemental readings will be helpful to students working on their term projects and their learning object assignments. Supplemental readings will be of interest to any student wishing to develop further understanding specific course concepts.

Information to support class exercises will also be posted on the course website; assignments are to be submitted online through URCourses.

Optional texts students may wish to consider are:

The negotiation classic **Getting To Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In** by Roger Fisher and William Ury originally published in 1981 (with Bruce Patton in second edition 2011) is likely already on many of your bookshelves. It is a Penguin paperback and multiple copies are available through the campus libraries. I highly recommend you read this short book.

**Becoming a Conflict Competent Leader: How You and Your Organization Can Manage Conflict Effectively.** By Craig E. Runde and Tim A. Flanagan; published in 2007 by Jossey-Bass (This title is available through the Archer library as an ebook.)

You may also wish to subscribe to the **Negotiation Insider**, an e-newsletter of the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School. Visit their website for more information: [www.pon.harvard.edu](http://www.pon.harvard.edu)

**The Student Success Centre** provides a number of workshops and support tools for students to assist with writing, study, and student life skills. Please be sure to take advantage of these assists if you feel the need. More information is available on the University website.
Students with any special need that may have an impact on their performance and participation in the course should contact the Centre for Student Accessibility to make arrangements according to the university policy on accessibility. The Instructor needs to receive any related communication from the Centre at the start of term. Please see the University website for more information or speak to staff in the Levene office.

Class routine

This course is delivered in a blended format. This means that class meets on campus for two successive weeks, and then students complete work and interact online in the third week. This schedule repeats through the semester. There will be 9 on-campus sessions and 4 online sessions. Details are provided in the course topics and reading list at the end of this syllabus.

Students are expected to check the course website regularly and to stay up to date with readings and assignments as the course progresses. The course is an evenly balanced theoretical/practical undertaking, and most of the practice takes place in class. If you have not prepared the readings and taken time to reflect on what you are learning in terms of the theory, you will find the class exercises difficult and of little value. This can, in turn, have a negative effect on your success in the course, and may also extend to impact members of your team and other classmates.

Every class, including those conducted online, requires students’ active, engaged participation. Your diligent application of skills and knowledge gathered from your preparation (including your own experiences where these are relevant) to the topics at hand will result in success on each of the components of the course. Your professional conduct in the class and online will enhance not only your own learning experience but the experience of everyone sharing the space.

During those weeks when the course is specifically delivered online, students are expected to prepare readings and assignments as they would for on-campus classes. In addition, during online weeks students themselves will work to develop specific learning tools for their peers. Each student is expected to interact with the course material online in EACH of the online sessions. This means that your participation, feedback and critique will be expected even when you are not the individual creating the learning object for the week. A portion of your grade is reserved for participation in the student-centred aspect of the course.

If you are aware of any planned absence(s) please provide the instructor with prior written notification at your earliest convenience. It is not possible to receive credit for activities and submissions held in classes you have missed.

Academic integrity is a cornerstone of the course. Please familiarize yourself with the University Regulations on Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct in the University Calendar. I take these regulations and the Faculty of Business Administration procedures surrounding lapses in academic integrity very seriously and rigorously follow up on all cases.

Course components:
Create learning object 15% (includes a portion for participation all term)
Conflict management Exercises & cases 45%
Analysis of Conflict live case - groups 20%  Topic due October 17th (incl. a presentation)
Final exam 20%

Create learning object:

The intent of this component of the course is to motivate up-to-date reading and reflection on the course material. This element of the course also supports the analytical and communication skills of students. Students will build on course readings around a specific topic with additional reading and research, and will develop a learning tool or learning object to post on the course website, which other students will use/engage with to develop further understanding of a course topic. Students have much flexibility in choosing the format for their learning tool (e.g., video, documents, interactive exercises, quizzes, questions and response boards, cases, etc.) You should focus on not just content of the readings but also application to organizations and the business world.

Your learning object should be structured with these elements in mind:

a. What is the principal message you wish to convey; what are the most important learning points from the material?
b. What evidence did you find to illustrate your point(s)?
c. What counter arguments are present (or missing) in the literature/research?
d. How does your topic relate to other modules in the course?
e. What is the most effective way to encourage students to develop a solid understanding of this material?

You are free to use any tools and devices you can imagine in order to create a meaningful learning experience around conflict management. Online activities/presentations are limited to 25 minutes, with some form of evaluation or follow up for student to come immediately after. You may want to consider drawing the class’s attention to the application of your topic by preparing questions and discussion points, for example, that link the main message of the material you prepared with current events or organization examples from your work experience or prior class discussion that will help the class to process the key learning and apply it.

Students will complete this activity in small groups, depending on enrollment, and you will select dates to complete this course requirement and confirm the schedule with the instructor through UR Courses.

Exercises and cases:

In-class exercises, which require preparation beforehand and which will require reflection and writing after class, form an important part of the course. There are a variety of exercises and cases in the course which will permit each student to experience a variety of roles in conflict management. These will be conducted in class when we meet face to face.
Your preparation, execution and evaluation of the exercise will contribute to your mark. Students may complete a preparation sheet in some instances and will write an analysis of the exercise and evaluate their participation in the exercises. There may also be an element of peer review involved in these exercises and cases.

The following are broad guidelines to keep in mind when preparing for and analyzing experiential exercises:

1. Can you explain the situation from your role point of view (observer, invested party)?
2. Can you explain any investigation/research/reading you completed to expand your understanding of the conflict?
3. Have you provided comment on the specific area of the course we are exploring at the moment and how it applies to the conflict in question?
4. Did you discuss how the outcome of this experience/exercise prepares you to face similar challenges, consolidates your knowledge, or poses new questions for you as a learner as well as a manager or business owner?

Analysis of conflict live case:

Students will write up a brief case study of an existing conflict management scenario derived from current events or experience. Instructor approval of paper topics is required before work on the project begins. A 400-500 word (maximum) overview of the proposed conflict, sources of information, and a plan for the development of the case is due by the deadline specified in the course calendar.

The exercise is expected to be an original piece of work, drawing on primary and secondary sources. You are discouraged from using material from other courses and diligent citing of sources is expected. You will be evaluated based on your original contribution so be sure to emphasize the analysis and originality you bring to the conflict under discussion. The paper is due at the end of term, on December 5th.

The paper will be completed as a group exercise and we will discuss group formation in the first class. Each group will make a brief presentation in the final class of the semester, based on their paper topic. This is an opportunity to explain your main ideas about the conflict and to receive feedback. The presentation accounts for a portion of the grade in this assignment.

Final exam:

The date and location of the final exam are set by the Registrar.
Please note that this outline is tentative and may be adjusted depending on the pace and preparation of students in the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS Date</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
<th>CASE/ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Sept. 12</td>
<td>Introduction, Prisoner's dilemma, Theories of conflict, Identifying conflict</td>
<td>Be sure to obtain a copy of the text and begin your reading before our first class Chapters 1 &amp; 3</td>
<td>Discussion of teams for live case Watch the website for further materials Select your week for the Learning Object assignment Pemberton exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Sept. 19</td>
<td>Approaches to conflict resolution, Diagnosing conflict</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>Pink Power case</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 ONLINE Sept. 26</td>
<td>Stakeholder theory, Power in conflict</td>
<td>Readings on stakeholder theory – UR Courses Chapter 14</td>
<td>Case – Nova Nada Activities as determined by students working on their learning object</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Oct. 3</td>
<td>Negotiation, Interest-based negotiation</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>Cinnamon exercise More School, less Tax exercise</td>
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<td>5 Oct. 10</td>
<td>Adapting negotiation styles</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Simulation – some work done online before class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 ONLINE Oct. 17</td>
<td>Forms of alternate dispute resolution</td>
<td>Readings on ADR UR Courses</td>
<td>Essay outline due Activities as determined by students working on their learning object</td>
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<td>7 Oct. 24</td>
<td>Microskills for ADR</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
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<td>8 Oct. 31</td>
<td>Mediation</td>
<td>Chapters 6, 7</td>
<td>In class exercise Mike &amp; Vicky</td>
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<td>9 ONLINE Nov. 7</td>
<td>Arbitration</td>
<td>UR Courses readings on arbitration</td>
<td>Temple Spa Case Activities as determined by students working on their learning object</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Nov. 14</td>
<td>Unionized dispute resolution</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
<td>Drug Testing Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 Nov. 21</td>
<td>Cross-Cultural dispute resolution, Commercial dispute resolution</td>
<td>Chapters 11, 13</td>
<td>Fertilizer case Santa Clara Pueblo case</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
<td>Activities</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>ONLINE Nov. 28</td>
<td>Designing dispute resolution systems</td>
<td>Chapter 16 URCourses readings Activities as determined by students working on their learning object</td>
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<td>Workplace issues</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Dec 5</td>
<td>Indigenous approaches to conflict resolution Talking Circle</td>
<td>URCourses reading on culture in negotiations Paper due Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 12</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
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