

Fall 2017

## CMST 419: INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

TR 12:40 - 1:55pm  
HSS 219

Instructor: Dr. Courtney N. Wright  
Office: 293 Com, office 274  
Office Hours: Thursdays 11am-noon/by appointment (email your M-F availability to schedule an appt.)  
Phone: 865.974.7066  
Email: cwright@utk.edu (email is the best way to contact me)

**In order to receive a reply**, your email must be sent from your UTK account and include -

- 1) an appropriate subject line (e.g., CMST 419:Homework Question),
  - 2) a salutation (e.g., Dear Dr./Professor Wright)
  - 3) a body detailing the purpose of your email
  - 4) a signature (e.g., Sincerely, Your First Name and Last Name)
- (for additional assistance see <http://www.entrepreneur.com/blog/225719>)

*\*I check email once during business hours. Please note that you have not contacted me via email until you have heard back from me. However, if you do not hear from me within 48 hours, please resend your email.*

### **REQUIRED TEXT:**

Hocker, J., & Wilmot, W. (2018). *Interpersonal conflict*. (10<sup>th</sup> Edition) McGraw-Hill.

\*Additional readings will be provided by the professor

\*Students who obtain an earlier edition of the textbook are responsible for any differences in the content

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this course, you will develop an advanced understanding of factors that influence the role of communication in interpersonal conflict. By the end of this course, you should be able to identify, analyze, and [more] effectively navigate the conflict situations you will inevitably encounter in your personal and professional interactions. This course is applicable to each of us because everyone has had, is having, and/or will be have conflict at some point in their lives. Together, we will examine the role of communication in creating, reflecting, and managing conflict. Throughout the course, we will also discuss the influences of factors such as technology and diversity on conflict communication as we explore general models of conflict and its manifestations in specific contexts. Class activities, readings, discussion, writings, lectures, presentations, and exams will be used to facilitate, reinforce, and evaluate your learning.

### **PROFESSIONALISM:**

Your status as upperclassmen at the University of Tennessee implies that you are independent learners and responsible adults. Therefore, you are expected to follow directions, take quality notes, and appropriately manage your time to adhere to due dates, prepare for exams/presentations, complete assignments, and seek assistance when necessary. A successful semester will require us to function effectively individually and collectively. Therefore, we should each be prepared for class, participatory (i.e., awake, alert, and attentive during class sessions/activities), and behave in a civil, ethical, and cooperative manner.

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**ATTENDANCE:**

Punctuality and bringing the course readings with you are expectations for this course. Excluding our first meeting, designated in-class workshops, and final project presentations class sessions are NOT mandatory. However, your attendance and active participation will be vital to your learning and performance outcomes. When absent, it is your responsibility to acquire the notes and materials you missed from one of your classmates. You are welcome to use blackboard to ask for such assistance from your classmates. Feel free to notify me beforehand of any excused absences.

**LAPTOPS AND CELL PHONE USAGE:**

I consider the use of laptops distracting and therefore, do not allow their use in class. Taking notes by hand may not be preferable but research shows that [writing by hand is better for retaining information](#). Taking notes on the readings before class and bringing those materials with you to class can lighten the responsibility of taking notes by hand during class. The unapproved use of cell phone technology during class lectures, presentations, and/or discussions is distracting and socially inappropriate. Any student(s) observed using cell phones will be politely asked to quietly collect their belongings and exit the classroom. In addition to freeing students to pursue more important activities (e.g., communicating with friends/family/employers), it is my hope that this policy will help reduce classroom distractions so we can form an engaged classroom community.

**CLASSROOM CIVILITY:**

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: <http://civility.utk.edu/>.

**DIVERSITY:**

Exposing students to diverse people, ideas and cultures increases opportunities for intellectual inquiry, encourages critical thinking, and enhances communication and information competence. Through listening, thoughtful consideration, and respectful responses to all viewpoints, we will each benefit. Diversity and fairness unite us with the wider professional and global community.

**ACCESSIBILITY:**

I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. Student should request academic accommodations during the first week of the semester. Students are strongly encouraged to register with services for students with disabilities for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:**

All students enrolled in Communication courses are accountable for compliance with University regulations regarding academic integrity. Relevant information can be located on the University's web page. If you are in doubt about what constitutes academic dishonesty, speak to me before an assignment is due and/or examine the University web site. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an exam (e.g., copying others' answers, providing help to others, using a crib sheet) or plagiarism of a paper or exercise (e.g., taking material from readings without citation, copying another student's work).

Cases of academic dishonesty will result in failure of the course and administrative involvement. Other penalties may also apply. If you have *any* questions or confusion regarding academic dishonesty, please refer to the Hilltopics Student Handbook or ask me.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** I encourage you to start on assignments early and be attentive to the course schedule and deadlines. ALL assignments are to be personally turned in to me unless otherwise noted. Therefore, do not put assignments in my mailbox or submit them electronically. Simply, it is your responsibility to make sure I receive your assignments on time. Students should expect to take examinations on the dates scheduled.

I make it a policy to not accept late work, schedule make-up exams, or assign incompletes. Any assignment(s) not received during the time when they were collected will be considered “late”. It is important to note that I make it a practice to collect assignments at the beginning of class. Therefore, being late to class can make your assignment(s) late. I am aware that in extreme circumstances late work, make-up exams, and/or incomplete procedures may be necessary. In the event of such cases, it is your responsibility to notify me of your circumstance and request such assistance. In the event of an emergency, please contact me via email.

All Communication Studies majors are required to keep electronic versions of papers and presentations completed for this class and all communication studies classes. To complete the capstone class (CS 499), you must turn in a portfolio that contains all of your work in the major.

***Course Readings:*** Read the designated readings **before** coming to class on the day the readings are due. Please come to class: 1) with your textbook/course readings, 2) prepared to discuss the material and 3) able to provide examples and illustrations of the theories and concepts addressed. In addition to completing the course readings, I recommend students complete the discussion questions located at the end of each chapter. While these questions may not be graded, your attention to them will be noted in the quality of your contributions to class sessions (i.e. participation) and completion of course assessments, projects and papers.

If you cannot not recall specific information from the readings then you have not fulfilled your responsibilities for class. Therefore, I encourage students read the material AND take notes on the material that they can refer to during class discussion and in preparation for subsequent assignments.

*\*Details regarding the course evaluation components will be provided in class and listed on the course website.*

#### **Course Evaluation Components:**

Learning Assessments	40%
Today in Conflict Presentation	15%
Conflict Analysis Paper	25%
<u>Conflict Analysis Presentation</u>	<u>20%</u>
Total Points	100%

#### **EVALUATION:**

**Grade Inquiries:** Sometimes it can be difficult to assess the meaning of the grades you earn in a class. I also understand that sometimes students are disappointed by a grade earned and am willing to meet with students in my office to discuss their exam/assignment grades. These meetings are important opportunities to provide clarification and encouragement to assist you in succeeding in this course. Therefore, please take advantage of them. While I welcome opportunities to meet with students to discuss their performance in this course, it is important that we conduct these interactions respectfully.

If at any point you want to discuss with me how you can improve your grade on subsequent assignments please do not hesitate to meet with me. I strongly encourage students who perform below a C-/70% to meet with me to develop a strategy for improving throughout the remainder of the semester. The later you wait in the semester to meet with me then the less time there is to improve. Therefore, if you delay seeking assistance, a minor bump in the road may lead to an unnecessary undesirable outcome.

You must complete all assigned work to receive credit in this course. Individual assignment grades and final grades will be determined on a point basis according to the following breakdown:

	<b>Assignments worth 100 pts</b>	<b>Description of Work Quality</b>
<b>A</b>	93 – 100	Work that is truly outstanding and consistently exceptional OR outstanding in most areas and good in others.
<b>A-</b>	90 – 92	Work that is generally of high quality and good in most areas.
<b>B+</b>	87 – 89	Work that is good in most areas, significantly distinguishable from average work, AND in some areas exceeds basic expectations
<b>B</b>	83 – 86	Work that is good and reflective of average work and meets basic expectations
<b>B-</b>	80 – 82	Work that is good and somewhat qualifies as average work and meets basic expectations
<b>C+</b>	77 – 79	Work that is somewhat above the basic standards in many areas fulfills expectations of the assignments.
<b>C</b>	73 – 76	Work that generally meets the most basic standards in most areas and expectations of the assignment.
<b>C-</b>	70 – 72	Work that barely meets the most basic standards in some areas and expectations of the assignment.
<b>D</b>	60 – 69	Work that overall only meets the most minimal standards and does not demonstrate an effort to perform at a higher level
<b>F</b>	0 - 59	Work that does not meet the most minimal assignment standards.

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