CRIM 410L: Conflict Management Skills

Instructor of record: Email:
Day: TBD Phone: 604-504-7441
Time: TBD Office #: A203…
Room #: TBD Office Hours: TBD

Calendar Description:
Students learn and practice methods of negotiation, conflict analysis, management, and de-escalation, and mediation. Through study, role-playing, structured simulated exercises, and group work, students develop and practice skills, such as active listening, probing, reframing, asserting, confronting, problem specification, and solution development.

Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Recognize the benefits and opportunities of working collaboratively in preventing and managing conflict;
- Identify personal, group, cognitive, cultural, societal and other factors that shape behaviour in conflict situations;
- Recognize and manage complex emotional responses, including their own, in a conflict situation;
- Identify and specify the nature and sources of a conflict;
- Demonstrate active listening, asserting, confronting, and solution development skills;
- Facilitate conflict management processes (conferencing, negotiation, arbitration, mediation);
- Describe and contrast emerging uses of conflict management methods in the justice system and in other contexts, including accountability boards, family and group conferencing, restorative justice approaches, healing circles, circle sentencing, victim-offender mediation;

Required Text(s):

Other Resources:


## Schedule of Topics:

**BLOCK 1**

**Introduction to the course**

**Understanding Conflict**

- What is conflict?
- The importance of conflict management and peacemaking skills in the workplace and other contexts.
- The application of conflict prevention, interpersonal and group skills in daily interactions within the criminal justice system (examples from street work, bylaw and law enforcement, border control, courts, corrections, and the community sector).
- Applications of conflict management methods in criminal justice (including but not limited to negotiation, arbitration, alternative dispute resolution, diversion programs, conferencing, mediation in instances of disciplinary complaint involving police officers, restorative justice).
- Conflict management and reconciliation in social and political conflicts and in post-conflict situations.
- Conflict management and diversity in varying cultural contexts.
Communication

- Non-violent communication.
- Having difficult conversations.
- Being aware of and respectful of differences.
- Avoiding disrespectful words, actions, gestures (and what is justified as humour).
- Recognizing the games people play (e.g., emotional blackmail, shaming, threat of rejection).
- Providing constructive feedback.
- Enforcing compliance with rules.
- Dealings with conflicting, unrealistic or unacceptable expectations.
- Facilitating communications between others (e.g., listening, understanding, empathy, paraphrasing, summarizing, ensuring everyone can speak freely, re-focusing, guiding).

Skill demonstration and Practice: Providing and receiving feedback

BLOCK 2

Different attitudes and approaches to conflict

- Different approaches to conflict management.
- Healthy and unhealthy ways of dealing with conflict (e.g., avoidance, confrontation, collaboration, rule-based compliance).
- Emotional intelligence.
- Compassionate inquiry
- Conflict and relationships.
- Transforming damaged relationships (e.g., healing, reconciliation).
- Impact of conflict on individuals (e.g., potential traumatic effect, withdrawal, ostracism).

Techniques of conflict de-escalation

- Managing spatial aspects of the interaction.
- Slowing down the interaction.
- Personalizing the interaction.
- Relieving stress.
- Emotional high-jacking.
- Avoiding wrong or easily misunderstood signals.
- Avoiding arguments – focusing on the future.
- Careful use of humour and play to diffuse tensions.
- Active listening.
- Expressing understanding and empathy, seeking clarifications.
- Exploring immediate solutions.

Skills Demonstration and Practice: De-escalating a conflict situation

BLOCK 3

Analyzing and understanding a conflict
• Abandoning pre-conception and biases.
• Identifying the nature of a conflict and the parties and interests involved
• Identify the main sources of the conflict, including communication styles, attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, emotions.
• Understanding power imbalances in a conflicted relationship and assessing the potential vulnerability of individuals involved.
• Understanding each party’s perspective and concerns, as well as the context in which the conflict is occurring (including demonstrating empathy).
• Verifying hypotheses about the nature and sources conflict (e.g., through review of documentation, other sources of information, discussion with parties).
• The main phases of the mediation process.

Skills

• The Key skills (organization, persuasion, empathy, active listening, probing, paraphrasing, summarizing, elucidating, challenging, hypothesis formulation, hypothesis validation; non-verbal communication)

Skills Demonstration and Practice: Demonstrating foundational skills.

BLOCK 4

Mediation

• Difference between arbitration and mediation (examples).
• Consent of participants.
• Being aware of one’s own pressure points, emotions, and potential biases.
• The mediation process.
• The mediation tools.

Skills Demonstration and Practice: The mediation process.

Issues in Mediation

• Children and other vulnerable groups as participants in mediation.
• Creating a safe space and process.
• Accounting and compensating for power imbalances in a conflicted relationship.
• Remaining aware of cultural differences.
• Achieving and communicating impartiality.
• Finding leverage and the use of authority.
• Dealing with pressure tactics, e.g., power imbalances, attempts at bullying, outside pressures or influences.
• Identifying and building on changes in attitude, behaviour, insights and emotions of parties.
• Helping parties identify the triggers of conflict escalation or negative communication.
• Helping parties move from a “position” to a “solution” (soliciting and exploring possible solutions; non-directive suggestions of elements of a solution).
• Helping parties formulate the terms of an agreement/solution (win/win solutions, healthy concessions, apologies, reparation, undertakings).
• Accountability for agreements or solutions?

Course Evaluation:

Mid-term examination: 20%
Skill demonstration exercise 1: 20%
Skill demonstration exercise 2: 20%
Skill demonstration exercise 3: 20%
Skill demonstration exercise 4: 20%

Exams:
There is one mid-term exam for this course worth 20% of the final grade.

Rewriting Exams and Papers:

Students are obligated to attend and complete the examinations only on the date and time outlined in the course schedule. It is essential that you arrive on time for the exam.

Under most circumstances, a missed examination will result in a grade of “zero” for that examination. Make-up exams are not permitted, unless there are extenuating circumstances with the prior approval of the instructor. Extenuating circumstances are limited in definition and are defined by the instructor. An example of an extenuating circumstance would be the hospitalization of a student that is confirmed by hospital personnel. Lack of preparation, forgetfulness, holidays, sleeping in late, or work obligations are not acceptable examples of extenuating circumstances.

Make-up Assignments and Examinations:

Make-up assignments are not permitted.

Grading System:

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<td>95% and above</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65% - 69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90% - 94%</td>
<td>C</td>
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Use of Electronics and Technology in the Classroom:

All students are expected to regularly check their UFV email for course related correspondence. All course assignments must be word processed. Students are expected to log on and use the course website http://www.ufv.ca/online throughout the semester, which requires both Internet and flash access.

Academic and Non-Academic Student Conduct:

Students should carefully review the University’s policies on student conduct. As a UFV student, you are bound by these student conduct policies.

In terms of academic conduct, all written and oral submissions must conform to UFV standards for academic integrity in relation to avoiding directly participating in, aiding and/or abetting various forms of academic misconduct, including, but not limited to: (1) plagiarism; (2) cheating; (3) impersonation; (4) improper access to examination materials; (5) falsification of academic records; (6) resubmission of work; (7) improper research practices; and/or (8) obstruction of the academic activities of another person. Student academic misconduct is extremely serious and, if documented, will result in a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and in the course. All suspected violations will be reported to the Director of the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice and handled in accordance with established UFV procedures.

For non-academic conduct, students are expected to conduct themselves in a mature and responsible manner, and will be held responsible for their actions, whether acting alone or in a group. In particular, students are expected to be attentive and non-disruptive in class.

Information on Original Research:

Due to human research ethics concerns, the conduct of original research is strictly prohibited unless a student has expressly sought and received prior written permission from the course professor. By way of example, original research includes written and oral communications of any kind with persons and agencies external to the course.

Referencing and Direct Quotations:

Direct quotations should be used sparingly. Students should be aware that the instructor reserves the right to fail any written work where a certain percentage (this is up to the instructor) of the total body of the written work is comprised of direct quotes, irrespective of whether the information is extracted from one or multiple sources. For additional information on plagiarism, see the UFV Library Guide on Plagiarism and the UFV Writing Centre Handout on Plagiarism.

Attendance and Tardiness:

Students are expected to attend all classes and, as applicable, labs. Although class attendance is usually optional unless the course syllabus stipulates otherwise (for example, some courses have mandatory attendance policies requiring that a certain number or proportion of classes be attended), it is in your best interests to attend. Furthermore, some classes with guest lecturers, oral presentations, seminar discussions and other special learning activities may have “required” attendance as the material is very
difficult, if not impossible, to make up if you miss these specific classes. Students who miss classes should be aware that class absences may adversely affect their course participation marks, as applicable. If you cannot attend a class, as a professional courtesy, please contact your instructor at the earliest possible time to let them know. You are responsible for all material presented in a missed class. As a general rule, Criminology faculty do not post their lecture notes or PowerPoint slides. Missed class notes should be obtained from fellow students and not the instructor.

Classes begin at the scheduled time and you should arrive a few minutes early to prepare. Students should be respectful of their classmates and instructors by avoiding unnecessary tardiness. If you are late, please enter the class with as little disruption as possible and be aware that some instructors may request that you not enter the class after it has begun or until the mid-class break.

No-Show Policy:

Students are required to attend the first class of the term, or notify the instructor in advance if they are unable to attend. Any student who does not attend the first class may be withdrawn by the instructor under the Attendance policy. At the end of the first class, the instructor completes a Notice of Withdrawal. Failure to Attend form, and submits it to OReg. The attendance policy does not apply to students who drop out after the first class — these students must withdraw themselves. Please remember that students who are not withdrawn will require a grade at the end of the term.

Office Hours and Email Correspondence:

All students are encouraged to meet with the instructor during regularly scheduled office hours or by making an appointment, particularly in relation to asking questions about course assignments and exams. Students should use email correspondence with restraint and can generally expect a response time of approximately 24-48 hours during regularly scheduled working hours (Monday to Friday). The instructor reserves the right to ask students to come in person to office hours or at a mutually agreed time to address specific inquiries.

Changing Status:

Students are expected to be aware of important Registration Dates, including course withdrawal dates. See UFV Important Registration Dates.

School of Criminology and Criminal Justice Handbook:


Student Services:

A list of services for students can be found at http://www.ufv.ca/studentservices.htm. Students with documented disabilities requiring academic and/or exam accommodation should contact Disability Services at the beginning of the semester to arrange the necessary accommodations. Students seeking accommodations are expected to follow the applicable Disability Services procedures, including making advance arrangements for exams.