

**Syllabus Conf 731  
Conflict in Organizations  
Spring 2009**

**Meeting times:** Tuesdays, 7:20 – 10:00 PM

**Meeting place:** Arlington Professional Center (Original Building) Room 250

**Instructor:** Robin J. Ericson, PhD (Rob)

**Phone:** 301-713-1373 x162

**Email:** rericson@gmu.edu

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Primary Texts:**

Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement (3rd Edition) by Dean G. Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim

Organizational Culture and Leadership (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition) by Edgar H. Schein

Organizational Communication: Perspectives and Trends by Michael J. Papa, Tom D. Daniels, and Barry K. Spiker

Other supplemental material may be assigned as required.

**Purpose:** *Explores the intersection and the dynamics of organizational behavior and the dimensions of conflict. Theoretical perspectives and cases are used to examine the issues involved in conflict analysis and resolution. Strategies for prevention and intervention are practiced. Students will conduct field research in the greater metropolitan district to help integrate course content.*

**Students with special needs:** Students with documented disabilities or special needs should let me know during the first class period so that I can accommodate their needs throughout the course. We will accommodate religious practices as appropriate; please let me know if there are any conflicts, so we can address any concerns equitably.

**Student resources:**

Academic advising center – 703-993-2470

Campus counseling center – 703-993-2380

Office of Disability Services – 703-993-2474

Writing center – 703-993-4491

**Classroom conduct:** This course will be run as a seminar with an emphasis on discussion and student presentations. We value critical thinking and therefore, it is imperative that students read the assigned books and articles prior to the class with a critical eye. Active thought and participation in class discussions will be expected.

**Work Ethic:** CONF 731 is designed as a collaborative learning experience. It is important that students participate in every class and that they contribute actively to groups and class discussions. You are expected to participate enthusiastically in group activities while respecting the opinions and valuing the work of other group members. You cannot succeed in this class with your individual effort alone.

However, any individual work should be strictly your own. Presenting another's work as your own (plagiarism) or even your own work developed for a previous course will result in a zero grade for the assignment. While a powerful tool, please use the internet with caution. Reference your sources, resist the temptation to cut and paste material into your own work, and use independent validation of the information where appropriate.

**Grading Policy:** We will follow all George Mason University policies and use the following deliverables to assign your particular grade points for this class.

<b>15%</b>	Group discussions.	Participation in all class sessions.	Group and individual effort.
<b>15%</b>	Dual Concern Model analysis. Reflective paper.	Due 2/3/09 Due 2/10/09	Individual effort.
<b>15%</b>	Self-selected book discussion.	2/17/09 – 4/14/09	Individual and group effort.
<b>15%</b>	Organizational visit proposal.	Due 2/24/09	Individual effort.
<b>20%</b>	Organizational visit report.	Due 4/7/09	Individual effort.
<b>20%</b>	Final presentation	Due 4/21/09 or 4/28/09	Individual and group effort.
<b>100%</b>	<i>Total Individual and Group Effort</i>		

Additional guidance on individual assignments will be posted on Blackboard as needed. Please visit our site daily and be sure to check your George Mason email regularly.

**Reading and Testing Schedule:**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Primary Topic</b>	<b>Assignments. Please read any assigned material prior to the class meeting.</b>
1	Tuesday 1/27/09	<b>Weather Cancellation</b> Dual Concern Model	<i>Social Conflict</i> Chapters 1-4 – <b>Blackboard discussion</b>
2	Tuesday 2/3/09	Structural Change Model	<i>Social Conflict</i> Chapters 5-8 – <b>Dual Concern Model analysis</b>
3	Tuesday 2/10/09	Problem Solving	<i>Social Conflict</i> Chapters 9-11- <b>Reflective paper</b>
4	Tuesday 2/17/09	Organization	<i>Organizational Culture and Leadership</i> Chapter 1-4 – <b>Book discussions start</b>
5	Tuesday 2/24/09	Culture	<i>Organizational Culture and Leadership</i> Chapters 5-11 - <b>Organizational visit proposal</b>
6	Tuesday 3/3/09	Leadership	<i>Organizational Culture and Leadership</i> Chapters 12-15
7	Tuesday 3/17/09	Change	<i>Organizational Culture and Leadership</i> Chapters 16-19
8	Tuesday 3/24/09	Organization and Communication	<i>Organizational Communication</i> Chapters 1-4
9	Tuesday 3/31/09	Culture and Communication	<i>Organizational Communication</i> Chapters 5-8
10	Tuesday 4/7/09	Leadership and Communication	<i>Organizational Communication</i> Chapters 9-11 – <b>Organizational visit report</b>
11	Tuesday 4/14/09	Change and Communication	<i>Organizational Communication</i> Chapters 12-14 - <b>Book discussions end</b>
12	Tuesday 4/21/09	Individual Presentations	<b>Organizational visit presentations</b>
13	Tuesday 4/28/09	Individual Presentations	<b>Organizational visit presentations</b>
14	Tuesday 5/5/09	Organizational Ethics	Group exercise

We will conduct one class meeting on line as a Blackboard discussion session, date to be determined and announced in advance.

Any revisions to this syllabus will be negotiated among class members and posted on Blackboard with a revision date.