

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
PTH 626 Conflict Resolution in the Church
September 5-6, 2008
Springfield, Missouri

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students who take this course will gain a working understanding of the biblical and practical nature of conflict resolution. An examination of the conflict cycle, styles of conflict management, and intervention strategies for resolving conflict will provide you with the foundations for handling conflict in a healthy manner. Special focus will be given to common triggers of interpersonal conflict as well as the leader's pivotal role in resolving church conflict.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Cognitive Outcomes

Upon completion of this course you should be able to...

1. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the biblical aspects of conflict resolution
Identify the phases of the conflict cycle
Understand various styles of conflict management, including your own preferred style

Character/Attitude Outcomes

Upon completion of this course you should...

1. Experience decreased fear/stress associated with conflict situations
2. Gain confidence for handling conflict effectively

Skill Outcomes

Through this study, you should be better equipped to...

- Integrate healthy conflict resolution skills in your personal and leadership environments
- Evaluate the effectiveness of various conflict management styles for given conflict settings.
3. Design relevant tools/resources to assist you in the process of teach others within their influence how to manage conflict

COURSE METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this course is not to merely present a set of facts, but to equip you with the tools necessary to think critically and learn new skills for personally addressing conflict. To this end, class sessions will combine lecture, discussion, interviews, interactive exercises, case studies, and other instructional techniques. Regular and vigorous participation is expected.

COURSE TEXTS

Required Texts

Van Yperen, Jim. *Making Peace: A Guide to Overcoming Church Conflict*. Chicago: Moody, 2002. [264 pp.]

Shawchuck, Norman. *How You Can Help Me Manage Conflict More Effectively*. Leith, ND: Spiritual Growth Resources, 1983. [7 page Self-Assessment tool]

Recommended Reading

Sande, Ken. *The Peace Maker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*. 3d ed., Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004. [297 pp.]

Shawchuck, Norman. *How to Manage Conflict in the Church: Understanding & Managing Conflict*. Vol. 1. Leith, ND: Spiritual Growth Resources, 1983. [51 pp.]

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Read the textbook in its entirety.

Read the required text and prepare a two page typewritten "Reading Reflection." In this report you are to state whether or not you have completed the reading in its entirety, then, discuss three concepts from the book that were meaningful to you, and why. (This is not a review or summary outline of the book's main points, but a personal reflection on specific insights that were significant/helpful for you personally, and why.) Note: It is a violation of academic policy to claim credit for books read previously for credit. If student has already read the textbook in another class, please substitute another book(s) from the recommended reading or bibliography (250 page minimum). *Due December 1, 2008.*

2. Attend all class sessions

Regular and vigorous student participation is a key component to a successful academic experience. The class atmosphere is to be personal and collegial. When appropriate, questions, comments, and discussion are both welcome and expected, with the understanding that they are part of the learning process in a group setting. In respect to others, it is assumed that cell phones, pagers, etc. will remain off in the classroom.

3. Complete a post-session project

Each student will design a final project that assists them in integrating materials from the course into their personal context. Each project should be the equivalent of at least 8 pages, and should demonstrate thoughtful and thorough work. The project should be well-written, and free from grammatical error. Style should follow Turabian format. *Due December 1, 2008.*

Project options include:

- *Multimedia project:* Using the course as a starting point, develop a brief multimedia presentation (PowerPoint/Video/Music/Web-based, etc.) designed to effectively and relevantly communicate an aspect of conflict resolution to a specified target audience. A written manuscript should accompany the electronic presentation.
- *Case study:* Analyze a current or past conflict setting in light of course content. Show how different points of the conflict cycle developed, reactions to the conflict, and steps for resolution.
- *Discuss a Postmodern challenge impacting conflict resolution.* Identify a characteristic(s) of Postmodernity that impacts conflict resolution in the church (i.e. tolerance, pluralism, relativism, centrality of the individual, etc.), and provide suggestions for how leaders can effectively address these issues when address conflict with Postmoderns.
- *Critique a conflict situation in a major feature film.* Briefly provide the context of the conflict, then identify the phases of the conflict cycle and the conflict management styles used; finally, evaluate the resulting outcomes. The object of this exercise is to demonstrate the ability to think critically and reflect on elements within society, with the goal of using media in a meaningful and relevant manner for training others in conflict resolution. (Including a video clip of the conflict scene would be helpful, if possible.)
- *Sermons/Lessons:* using insights gained from the course, write at least two manuscript messages designed to clearly communicate conflict resolution skills to others. These messages should be contextualized and relevant to a specified target audience.
- *Research paper:* prepare a well-researched paper on some aspect of conflict resolution pertinent to the course that would be helpful to you.
- *Self-designed project:* You have the option of proposing a customized final project. The proposal must be submitted in written form, and the professor's permission must be secured in advance.

GRADING PROCEDURE

Pre-Session Reading & Report	30%
Class Participation	20%
Final Project	50%

Late work will be penalized.

OFFICE HOURS

My desire is to help every student succeed. Should you need assistance outside of normal class hours, I can be reached on Tuesdays and Thursdays at my office at AGTS. My office number is 268-1082. My home number is 889-5123. Please leave a message if necessary.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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_____. "Restitution: Going beyond forgiveness."
http://ag.org/pentecostalevangel/Articles2001/4573_altar.

Augsburger, David. *Caring Enough to Confront*. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1981.

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Barthel, Tara Klena and Judy Dabler. *Peacemaking Women: Biblical Hope for Resolving Conflict*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005.

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Easum, Bill. *Unfreezing Moves: Following Jesus Into the Mission Field*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001.

Edmiston, John. "A Christian Approach to Conflict Resolution." <http://www.eomtc.com/aibi>.

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Haugk, Kenneth C. *Antagonists in the Church: How to Identify and Deal with Destructive Conflict*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988. [189 pp.]

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Leas, Speed B. *Moving Your Church Through Conflict*. Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute, 1998.

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- Relationships in Your Organization*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1999.
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Web Sites

www.peacemaker.net or www.HisPeace.org
www.spiritualgrowthresources.com
www.leadershipu.com
www.barna.org

SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by Cheryl Taylor, Summer 2007