

# PSY 547: SOCIAL CONFLICT & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

## Spring 2024 T-TH 9:30-10:45—HSS 228

**Instructor:** Jim Halligan

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**Office Hours:** T/TH, 12:30-1:30, or by arrangement

### Required Text:

Wilmot, W. W., & Hocker, J. L. Interpersonal Conflict (9<sup>th</sup> edition) Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 2011.

### Overview:

- Psychology 547 is an upper division level course for juniors and seniors who have already taken six units of upper division psychology. In addition to serving as an elective course for Psychology majors, this course fulfills a core course requirement for the Segment III cluster titled Global Peace & Human Rights.
- We will utilize a variety of learning methods in this class such as readings, discussions, role-play exercises, lectures, videos, written assignments, tests, and group presentations. We will consider theoretical and practical approaches to the management, reduction, resolution, and transformation of interpersonal, inter-group, and intercultural conflict using cases from the textbook as well as those contributed by class members.

### Objectives:

1. To understand the role of communication in generating, escalating, reducing, resolving, and transforming conflict.
2. To understand theories of and research on conflict and apply the fundamental concepts of the field to intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intergroup conflicts.
3. To assess and improve our own ways of responding to conflict.
4. To study and practice the various processes of conflict intervention.

### General Policies:

- This class invites and encourages active participation in the learning process. You will be graded on your participation, so you must join us to make a full contribution. Be present, **on time**, prepared, curious, and flexible. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each session. If you must leave early, I would appreciate your consulting with me first. If you need to miss class, please try to email me ahead of time. You may miss three classes without penalty. More than three absences from class will result in loss of points for each additional absence.
- In addition, repeated lateness for class will be viewed as a partial absence and they will accumulate. If you know you will be missing class, hand your work in early to avoid penalty. Please let me know if you are experiencing **extreme** circumstances (e.g., medical emergency, death in family). I do consider these circumstances when determining final grades.
- All assignments, including readings, are due at the beginning of the class period. Late work **will not be accepted**, unless there are extraordinary circumstances. In such cases, please talk to me ahead of time if possible.
- Out of respect for your fellow classmates and your instructor, please turn off your cells, etc. while in class.
- This course is meant to be a learning experience for the students and the instructor, and any form of plagiarism is not a part of this process.

### Statement on Religious Holidays

- The faculty of San Francisco State University shall accommodate students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class activities. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays during the first two weeks of the class

each semester. If such holidays occur during the first two weeks of the semester, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed.

#### **Disability Accommodations statement**

- Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC) is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC is located in the Student Service Building and can be reached by telephone (voice/TTY 415-338-2472) or by email [dprc@sfsu.edu](mailto:dprc@sfsu.edu).

#### **Course Requirements:**

- **Please bring your textbooks to class.** Activities and discussions are based on the readings.
- **Conflict Journal:** You will be asked to keep a monthly journal of the conflicts you observe or in which you are involved, and reflect on the application of class concepts to those conflicts. Journals will be due **March 7<sup>th</sup>, April 11<sup>th</sup> & May 9<sup>th</sup>**. Journals should be typed and double-spaced. You will receive a handout the first week of class.
- **Exams** There will be two (2) written exams. Exams will include a combination of short essay, and multiple-choice questions. You will receive a quiz review sheet one week prior to the exam date.
- **Final Group Project:** The final project will be a group poster project covering & expanding on a topic or set of concepts from the text & class discussions. Each group will design a poster to illustrate the key concepts of their chosen topic. There will be a full handout & explanation of the Group Project in a few weeks.

| <b>GRADING:</b>                           |                | <i>Grade Scale: (%)</i> |            |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|------------|
| <i>Assignments:</i>                       | <i>Points:</i> | A = 94-100              | C = 73-75  |
| 1 Monthly Conflict Journals (20 pts each) | 60             | A- = 90-93              | C- = 70-72 |
| 2 Exams on readings (2 @ 25 points each)  | 50             | B+ = 87-89              | D+ = 66-69 |
| 3 Attendance, class participation         | 25             | B = 82-86               | D = 63-65  |
| 4 Final Group Poster Project              | 25             | B- = 79-81              | D- = 60-62 |
| 5 Response to 4 Posters (@5 pts each)     | 20             | C+ = 76-78              | F = ↓ 60   |
| 6 Coalition Map                           | 20             |                         |            |
| Total:                                    | 200            |                         |            |

#### **Recommended Videos & Readings:**

Getting To Yes, (1991), Fisher & Ury  
 Bush, R. A. & Folger, J. P., (1994). The promise of mediation  
 Cahn, D. D. (1992). Conflict in intimate relationships.  
 Folger, J. P., Poole, M. P., & Stutman, R. K. (1997). Working through conflict.  
 Kahn, L. S. (1988). Peacemaking: A systems approach to conflict management.  
 Chew, Pat K. (Ed.) (2001) The Conflict & Culture Reader  
 Tjosvold, D., Tjosvold, T., & Tjosvold, J. (1991). Love and anger: Managing family Conflict.  
 Ury, W. L. (1991). Getting past no: Negotiating with difficult people.

### Schedule of Class Sessions

| <b>Dates</b>   | <b>Topics and Activities</b>                                                       | <b>Readings/Homework</b>                         |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 1/30           | Introduction to course                                                             |                                                  |
| 2/1            | Get Acquainted—form base groups                                                    |                                                  |
| 2/6            | Intro to conflict, conflict defined                                                | IC: Chap. 1                                      |
| 2/8            | Personal views of Conflict: Microlab                                               |                                                  |
| 2/13           | Destructive Conflict—Gottman's 4 Horseman                                          | IC: Chap. 1                                      |
| 2/15           | Lens Model, gender & cultural filters                                              | IC: Chap. 2                                      |
| 2/20           | High & Low Context Cultures & Conflict                                             |                                                  |
| 2/22           | Conflict goals (TRIP)<br>Overlapping features of goals                             | IC: Chap. 3                                      |
| 2/27           | Clarifying Goals, Positions & Interests                                            | IC: Chap. 3                                      |
| 3/29           | Conflict Cycle                                                                     | IC: Chap. 3                                      |
| 3/5            | Conflict and Power, Power chairs; Power<br>Orientations & Applications             | IC: Chap. 4                                      |
| 3/7            | Relational Theory of Power; Power currencies                                       | <b>Feb Conflict Journals due</b>                 |
| 3/12           | Styles and tactics in conflict                                                     | IC: Chap. 5                                      |
| 3/14           | More Styles & Tactics                                                              | <i>Exam # 1 Review</i>                           |
| 3/19           | Introduce Poster Projects                                                          |                                                  |
| 3/21           | <b>Exam # 1</b>                                                                    |                                                  |
| <b>3/26 28</b> | <b>SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES</b>                                                     |                                                  |
| 4/2            | Emotions in Conflict, Communication & Conflict                                     | IC: Chap. 6                                      |
| 4/4            | Communication Exercises                                                            | IC: Chap. 6                                      |
| 4/9            | Analyzing Your Conflicts: Systems<br>Theory & conflict                             | IC: Chap. 7                                      |
| 4/11           | Principles OF Coalitions & Conflict<br>Coalition Maps- Poster Project check in     | IC: Chap. 7<br><b>Mar Conflict Journals due</b>  |
| 4/16           | Interpersonal Negotiation principles                                               | IC: Chap. 8                                      |
| 4/18           | Competitive↔collaborative negotiation.<br>Negotiation skills, processes & practice | IC: Chap. 8                                      |
| 4/23           | Poster Project Planning                                                            |                                                  |
| 4/25           | Third party Interventions—informal                                                 | IC: Chap. 9                                      |
| 4/30           | Third party Interventions—formal                                                   | IC: Chap. 9                                      |
| 5/2            | Mediation Process overview                                                         |                                                  |
| 5/7            | Forgiveness: Film: <i>Forgiving Mr. Mengele</i> .                                  |                                                  |
| 5/9            | Forgiveness & Reconciliation Discussion                                            | IC: Chap. 10<br><b>Apr Conflict Journals due</b> |
| 5/14           | Poster Presentations                                                               |                                                  |
| 5/16           | Exam # 2 Review                                                                    |                                                  |
| 5/23           | Exam # 2—8:00-10:00                                                                |                                                  |

