

**Note:**

**Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.**

## ***COURSE SYLLABUS***

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### **COMS 560**

#### **CONFLICT AND COMMUNICATION**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Analysis of theories and research of the role of communication in conflict in interpersonal, group, organizational, and societal contexts. Emphasis is placed on individual communication styles and competence in the management of conflict.

#### **RATIONALE**

Knowing that certain techniques of communication will produce certain responses, and knowing how to apply them in appropriate contexts will allow students to be more productive in their personal, academic, and work life. Knowing strategies and models of conflict resolution to use in political, religious, and business situations will provide a base for further study in international relations, counseling, and personal conflict resolution.

#### **I. PREREQUISITES**

None.

#### **II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASES**

Click on the following link to view the required resources for the term in which you are registered: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm>

#### **III. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING**

- A. Computer with basic audio equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
- C. Microsoft Word  
(Microsoft Office is available at a special discount to Liberty University students.)

#### **IV. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Identify and explain Biblical reasons for understanding and applying communication in conflicting situations that promotes unity and solvency.
- B. Understand current research as it relates to conflict management in interpersonal, group, business, church, and other contexts.
- C. Apply communication models and techniques that promote effective conflict resolution in various situations.
- D. Identify issues that contribute positively and negatively to conflict situations.

- E. Apply methods of conflict management to specific conflict situations.
- F. Select methods and techniques appropriate to fostering conflict resolution in personal situations.

## V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Textbook readings

- B. Discussion Board forums (4)

Students will read an article in the Helmick textbook and create a 400-word thread that discusses the article's contribution towards conflict management. The thread will be an article review and assess how the article contributes towards the topic of conflict management. The thread is due by the end of the day on Thursday of the assigned module/week. Students will write a 200-word reply to at least one classmate's thread by the end of Sunday of the same module/week.

- C. Journal Activities (25)

Each module will contain a number of exercises that enhance the textbook reading and serve to reinforce the student's understanding of conflict resolution principles. The student will complete all the Journal Activities within the same Word document and submit this document three times to the instructor for review.

- D. Interaction Papers (2)

One paper will be theoretical and one research-oriented. The purpose of both 7–8 page interaction papers is to show your understanding of the issues that cause conflict and the methods/resources currently being used to resolve those conflicts in specific contexts. They are to be comprehensive in their scope but brief in their presentation. In other words, they should cover the major issues of conflict and overview the methods and pitfalls of resolution.

- E. Essays (2)

Student will write two essays of their choice from a list of topics that will also be used as a study guide for their final exam. Essays should not be more than 5 pages double-spaced and should directly deal with the issue presented in the topic.

- F. Article Reviews (4)

Students will write four 2-page article reviews summarizing the issues and their opinions of the articles from selected readings in the Helmick text. The article review will include an assessment of the article's strengths and weaknesses and how its content contributes towards the subject of conflict management.

- G. Final Exam

The Final Exam will consist of 50 multiple-choice and true/false questions taken from the required reading in the Borisoff/Victor and Cahn/Abigail texts. There is a 2-hour time limit, and students may use their texts, notes, and study materials. The Final Exam must be completed by the last day of the course.

**VI. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES****A. Points**

Discussion Board forums (4 at 25 pts ea)	100
Journal Activities (25 at 10 pts ea)	250
Interaction Papers (2 at 135 pts ea)	270
Essays (2 at 70 pts ea)	140
Article Reviews (4 at 25 pts ea)	100
Final Exam	140

**Total: 1000****B. Scale**

A = 940–1000   A- = 920–939   B+ = 900–919   B = 860–899   B- = 840–859  
 C+ = 820–839   C = 780–819   C- = 760–779   F = 759 and below

**C. Disability Assistance**

Students with a documented disability may contact the Liberty University Online Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) at [LUOODAS@liberty.edu](mailto:LUOODAS@liberty.edu) to make arrangements for academic accommodations.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **COMS 560**

Textbooks: Borisoff and Victor, *Conflict Management: A Communication Skills Approach* (1998).  
 Cahn and Abigail, *Managing Conflict Through Communication* (2007).  
 Helmick and Petersen, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion Public Policy and Conflict Transformation* (2001).  
 Sande, *A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict* (2004).

<b>WEEK/ MODULE</b>	<b>READING &amp; STUDY</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENTS</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<b>1</b>	Cahn: Chapter 1 & 2 Borisoff: Chapter 1 Sande: Chapters 1–3 Helmick: 1 article Chapter Notes	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions Discussion Board Forum 1	0 0 25
<b>2</b>	Cahn: Chapters 3 & 4 Borisoff: Chapter 2 Sande: Chapters 4–6 Helmick: 1 article Chapter Notes	Journal Activities 1–9 Article Review 1	90 25
<b>3</b>	Cahn: Chapters 5 & 6 Borisoff: Chapter 3 Sande: Chapters 7 & 8 Helmick: 1 article Chapter Notes	Discussion Board Forum 2 Essay 1	25 70
<b>4</b>	Cahn: Chapters 7 & 8 Helmick: 1 article Chapter Notes	Article Review 2 Interaction Paper 1	25 135
<b>5</b>	Cahn: Chapters 9 & 10 Sande: Chapters 9 & 10 Helmick: 1 article Chapter Notes	Discussion Board Forum 3 Journal Activities 10–17	25 80
<b>6</b>	Cahn: Chapters 11 & 12 Helmick: 1 article Chapter Notes	Article Review 3	25
<b>7</b>	Cahn: Chapters 13 & 14 Helmick: 1 article Chapter Notes	Discussion Board Forum 4 Journal Activities 18–25 Essay 2	25 80 70
<b>8</b>	Borisoff: Chapters 4 & 5 Cahn: Afterword Sande: Conclusion Helmick: 1 article Chapter Notes	Article Review 4 Interaction Paper 2 Final Exam	25 135 140
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1000</b>

**NOTE:** Each course week begins on Monday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on Friday.