

ADVANCE Ministry Preparation

Sponsored by Gateway Seminary

CLE2117: Conflict Management in Ministry – 3 Hours

April-June, 2021

Every Tuesday, 7:30 -10:00 pm

Crosspoint Institute of Ministry Leadership, Milpitas, CA

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This class ordinarily meets for fifteen weeks for periods of two hours and fifty minutes including two 10-minute breaks. However, centers can choose to schedule this classes and times that work best for your ministry context as long as you meet the 45 hours of seat time required for this course

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of various types of conflict found in the local church and the dynamics of ministering in the midst of conflict. Emphasis will be placed on examining a biblical approach to understanding conflict, identifying causes of conflict, and developing strategies in preventing and resolving conflict. Tools for assessing individuals and systems that contribute to conflict, creating pastoral care interventions for redemptive management, and minimizing the destructive consequences of church conflict will be studied.

REQUIRED COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Appreciate the value of resolving conflict in the church.
2. Identify reasons for conflicts within the church.
3. Explore what scripture says concerning conflict management.
4. Demonstrate basic skills in conflict negotiation and resolution.
5. Evaluate appropriate strategies in resolving conflict.
6. Develop a personal philosophy of confronting conflict.
7. Commit themselves to being ministers of reconciliation.

COURSE COMPONENTS

The student will be exposed to the following basic subject areas:

- The nature and causes of conflict
- Basic conflict response modes
- Biblical and spiritual resources for conflict transformation
- The dynamics of how communication both prevents and creates conflict

- Basic confrontation skills for conflict resolution
- Barriers to reducing and resolving conflict
- Creation of firewalls for reducing the possibility of conflict

The student will be expected to develop a conceptual framework for:

- Understanding structural and systemic factors in congregational conflict
- Analyzing and diagnosing conflict within the church setting
- Developing strategies for preventing and reducing conflict in the church
- Utilizing effective confrontation in resolving conflict
- Resolving conflict between individuals as pastoral care
- Developing strategies for resolving conflict within the church body

The student will demonstrate affective growth in the following areas:

- Analyzing and diagnosing conflict situations
- Moving between conflict response modes in order to resolve conflict
- Effectively confronting others to bring about conflict resolution
- Using communication patterns that reduce the possibility of conflict
- Commitment to being a minister of reconciliation

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Bullard, George. *Every Congregation Needs a Little Conflict*. Duluth, GA: Chalice Press, 2008.

Osterhaus, James P., Joseph M. Jurkowski, and Todd A. Hahn. *Thriving Through Ministry Conflict: By Understanding Your Red and Blue Zones*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.

Strauch, Alexander. *If You Bite and Devour One Another*. Colorado Springs: Lewis & Roth Publishers, 2011.

VanSant, Sondra S. *Wired for Conflict: The Role of Personality in Resolving Differences*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Types, Inc., 2003.

Van Yperen, Jim. *Making Peace: A Guide to Overcoming Church Conflict*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2002.

ATTENDANCE AND EVALUATION

Attendance is expected at all class sessions. Students who miss more than *two class sessions* will receive a deduction of one letter grade per additional class session missed. If a student must miss a class for any reason, he/she is responsible for notifying the professor.

GRADING SCALE

A 94-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D 65-69
A- 90-93	B 83-86	C 73-76	F 0-64
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	

Late Work: Except in extraordinary circumstances, work must be submitted on or before the due date to receive credit.

ASSIGNMENTS

Reading Quiz

Each week you will have reading assignments from the text books. In class, you will take a brief quiz over your reading. **The average of your quiz scores is worth 1/4 of your final grade.**

Participation

Participation includes student contribution to weekly discussion of the textbook topics and possible applications as well as in-class group presentations on chapters. These presentations can be in the form of a PowerPoint or drama, role-play, charts, or drawings, and they will be assigned on a weekly basis by the instructor. **Participation is worth 1/4 of your final grade.**

Action Plan for Conflict Resolution

Using ideas from the textbooks plus one additional resource, type a 10-page paper that contains details an action plan for conflict resolution. The paper should be structured as follows:

Page 1: Introduction to the overall paper plus answering the question, what are the nature and causes of conflict

Pages 2-3: What are some of the basic modes of response to conflict, or how do people typically respond to conflict? How can these responses affect the life of a local congregation?

Pages 4-6: How will conflict be assessed and diagnosed?

Pages 7-9: How will effective confrontation be used to resolve conflict? What is the role of pastoral care in resolving conflict between individuals? What are some strategies that will both resolve conflict within the congregation?

Pages 10: What are some practices and methods of communication that can help prevent and reduce conflict between members of the congregation and within a staff team? What other conclusions have been drawn as a result of this action plan? **The Action Plan for Conflict Resolution is due week 15 and is worth 1/4 of your final grade.**

Mid-Term and Final

These tests will cover the reading as well as class lectures for the first half and second half of the class respectively. **The average score of the two tests is worth 1/4 of your final grade.**

CLASS SCHEDULE

- April 6** **Causes of Conflict, Part 1**
Pride
Perceived threat
Perceived loss
Assignments: READ: *Wired for Conflict*, Intro-Chapter 3
- April 13*** **No class**
- April 20** **Causes of Conflict, Part 2**
Personality differences (MBTI ®)
Assignments: READ *Making Peace*, Intro-Chapters 7
- April 27** **A Theology of Conflict, Part 1**
Trinity—A picture of harmony and unity
Creation—God’s original design
The Fall—the birth of conflict
Assignment: READ: *If You Bite and Devour One Another*, Intro-Chapter 3.
- May 4:** **Theology of Conflict, Part 2**
Spiritual dimensions of conflict
Emotional dimensions of conflict
Physical dimensions of conflict
Assignments: READ: *If You Bite and Devour One Another*, Chapters 4-8.
- May 11** **Responding to Conflict, Part 1**
Basic negative approaches and responses to conflict
Assignments: READ *Making Peace*, Chapters 8-9
- May 18** **Responding to Conflict, Part 2**
Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument
Review for Midterm
Assignments: READ *Thriving Through Ministry Conflict*, Intro-Chapter 9
- May 25** **Communication and Conflict**
Understanding and improving communication to reduce conflict
**Assignments: [Mid-Term Exam](#)
READ *Wired for Conflict* Chapters 4-5**
- June 1** **Confrontation and Conflict**
Learning how to effectively speak the truth in love
Assignments: READ *Every Congregation Needs a Little Conflict*, Chapters 1-5
- June 5**** **Models for Managing Conflict, Part 1 & 2**
The Peacemaker model and various conflict management models

Assignments: READ *Making Peace* Chapters 10-Epilogue; *Wired for Conflict* Chapters 6-7

June 8 Congregational Conflict, Part 1 & 2
Understanding the seven intensity levels of congregational conflict
Assignments: READ *Every Congregation Needs a Little Conflict* Chapters 6-12; *If you Bite and Devour One another* Chapters 9 & 10

June 15 Abilene Paradox & Conflict Firewalls
Assignments: READ Handout on The Abilene Paradox

June 22 Power & Conflict, Review for Final Exam
Assignments: PREPARE for discussion on how misuse of power causes conflict in congregations, REVIEW for final exam

June 29 Final Exam
Assignments: Action Plan for Conflict Resolution Due

* The instructor has another obligation.

**Additional Saturday class to make up the time to 45 hours.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Augsburger, David. *Caring Enough to Confront: How to understand and express your deepest feelings toward others*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1981.

Furlong, Gary T. *The Conflict Resolution Toolbox: Models and Maps for Analyzing, Diagnosing, and Resolving Conflict*. Mississauga, ON: John Wiley and Sons, 2005.

Gangel, Kenneth O., & Samuel A. Canine. *Communication and Conflict Management in Churches and Christian Organizations*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2002.

Haugk, Kenneth C. *Antagonists in the Church – How to Identify and Deal with Destructive Conflict*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988.

Halverstadt, Hugh F. *Managing Church Conflict*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991.

Kale, David W. *Managing Conflict in the Church*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 2003.

Kotter, John. *Leading Change*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing, 1996.

Lott, David B., Editor, *Conflict Management in Congregations*. Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute. 2001.

- McSwain, Larry L., And William C. Treadwell, Jr. *Conflict Ministry in the Church*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1981.
- Osterhaus, James P., Joseph M. Jurkowski, and Todd A. Hahn. *Thriving Through Ministry Conflict: By Understanding Your Red and Blue Zones*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.
- Oswald, Roy and Otto Kroeger. *Personality Type and Religious Leadership*. Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute, 1996.
- Patterson, Kerry, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzer. *Crucial Confrontations: Tools for Resolving Broken Promises, Violated Expectations, and Bad Behavior*. New York: McGraw -Hill, 2005.
- Poirier, Alfred. *The Peacemaking Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Church Conflict*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006.
- Richardson, Ronald W. *Creating a Healthier Church: Family Systems Theory, Leadership, and Congregational Life*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996.
- Sande, Ken. *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict, 3rd. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004.*
- Savage, John. *Listening and Caring Skills*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996. Shawchuck, Norman. *How to Manage Conflict in the Church, Vol I and II*, Leith, ND: Spiritual Growth Resources, 1996.
- Shelley, Marshall. *Leading Your Church Through Conflict and Reconciliation: 30 Strategies to Transform Your Ministry*. Bethany House, 1997.
- Smedes, Lewis B. *Forgive and Forget: Healing the Hurts We Don't Deserve*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1996.
- Steinke, Peter. *Healthy Congregations*. Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute, 1996.
- Steinke, Peter L. *How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems*. Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 2000.
- Sumi, Greg M. *The Church Manual on Conflict Resolution*. Pinedale, CA: G and F Publications, 2002.
- Susek, Ron. *Firestorm: Preventing and Overcoming Church Conflicts*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.
- VanSant, Sondra S. *Wired for Conflict: The Role of Personality in Resolving Differences*. Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Types, Inc., 2003.