

UCF Assessment

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Assessment Archives

Plan Year: 2015-2016 ▼

Program/Unit: Communication and Conflict - B.A. ▼

Program/Unit: Communication and Conflict - B.A. DRC Chair: Elizabeth Grauerholz

Year: 2015-2016 DRC: College of Sciences

Due Date: Coordinator(s): Kim Tuorto, Boyd Lindsley, James McCafferty

Mission:

The program in Communication and Conflict seeks to educate students and impart skills relevant across the career spectrum and in particular for careers in communication for conflict management and resolution at all levels of interaction: interpersonal, organizational, and international. Many organizations (including university systems, government, and private organizations) hire ombudspersons or investigators for internal conflict management and dispute resolutions and students from our program would be highly qualified applicants. Positions in sales, management, and development require strong negotiation skills, and other foundational element of the program. Graduates would also be well fitted for career fields including the law and adjudication, arbitration, and mediation. Stakeholders would include the university community including students, faculty and staff; regional organizations, including professional firms, not-for-profit organizations, government, and social issues constituencies.

Assessment Process:

Program assessment will be conducted by the Area Coordinator (Jim McCafferty) with the assistance of those non-adjunct faculty who assist with program course instruction. Where needed, adjunct faculty may be asked to provide data collected as part of their assigned coverage courses.

The Area Coordinator will ensure that majors in Communication and Conflict are administered the pretests (administered in the semester they declare themselves as majors) and posttests (administered as part of their declaration of intent to graduate) used in some of the outcome measures. Faculty in the major will collect those measures embedded in coursework (assessments of writing quality, oral skills etc.), making those results available to the area coordinator. In addition, some results may be collected as outlined below from the Graduating Seniors surveys and/or First Destination surveys administered to all graduates.

While this nascent degree program has no body of graduates at present, this assessment plan is designed to confirm that the requisite knowledge and skills needed by a communication professional in addressing conflict, the ability to analyze and respond to conflict, and effective writing skills are being developed. Over time, it is to be hoped that these outcome measures can be made even more rigorous in order to generate continued improvement through modifications to course content, teaching procedures, and practical experience in the field exercises and the like associated with this curriculum.

Results will be tabulated by the Area Coordinator and shared with C&C faculty as well as the general faculty of the Nicholson school (these are regular items of business at NSC workdays and faculty meetings). Suggestions for improvement will be developed at Area workday meetings and, where applicable, with contributions from colleagues at the Nicholson School of Communication.

Outcome: 1

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the basic constructs, terms, and concepts necessary to understanding communication and conflict.

Measure: 1.1

Internally-developed Pretest/Post-test:

A pretest featuring questions covering (noted as outcome 1) Communication and Conflict basic constructs, terms, and concepts will be administered to Communication and Conflict students in their first semester after declaring for the major.

As part of their 'graduation declaration' package, each student will be administered a post-test covering the same body of Communication and Conflict basic constructs, terms, and concepts.

Each student's pre- and post-test scores can be directly compared to show the impact of the Communication and Conflict curriculum on their knowledge of these basic constructs, terms, and concepts. Each student would be expected to show an increase in their knowledge base as demonstrated by a direct comparison of their pre- and post-test scores, with all graduating seniors being expected to demonstrate an average test score at or above the 70th percentile on the post-test in relevant outcome 1 questions.

Measure: 1.2

On the graduating senior survey students will answer the Communication and Conflict program specific question "Agree or disagree: I am confident in my knowledge of the basic concepts and procedures associated with conflict analysis, management, and resolution" using a 1-5 likert scale (5 being the highest). The average answer for this question should be 3.5 or higher. If a 7-point scale is used, the score should be a 5 or higher.

Outcome: 2

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the central theories associated with communication and conflict.

Measure: 2.1

Internally-developed Pretest/Post-test:

A pretest featuring questions covering (noted as outcome 2) knowledge of the central theories associated with communication and conflict will be administered to Communication and Conflict students in their first semester after declaring for the major.

As part of their 'graduation declaration' package, each student will be administered a post-test covering the same body of knowledge of the central theories associated with communication and conflict.

Each student's pre- and post-test scores can be directly compared to show the impact of the Communication and Conflict curriculum on their knowledge of the central theories associated with communication and conflict. Each student would be expected to show an increase in their knowledge base as demonstrated by a direct comparison of their pre-and post-test scores, with all graduating seniors being expected to demonstrate an average test score at or above the 70th percentile on the post-test in relevant outcome 2 questions.

Measure: 2.2

On the graduating senior survey students will answer the Communication and Conflict program specific question "Agree or disagree: I am confident in my knowledge of Conflict and Communication theory" using a 1-5 likert scale (5 being the highest). The average answer for this question should be 3.5 or higher. If a 7-point scale is used, the score should be a 5 or higher.

Outcome: 3

Students will be able to evaluate and apply key theories of communication and conflict at the interpersonal, Organizational, Community, and International level.

Measure: 3.1

Students in COM4804 "Conflict and Communication Context" and COM4806 "Conflict and Communication Case Studies" are required to complete a case-study research & writing assignment in which their understanding and application conflict and communication theory will be evaluated. It is expected that 75% of students will perform at a satisfactory (70% or higher) level on the portion of the assignment related to applying conflict and communication theory.

Measure: 3.2

On the graduating senior survey students will answer the Communication and Conflict program specific question "Agree or disagree: I am confident in my ability to apply Conflict and Communication theory to better understand real world conflicts" using a 1-5 likert scale (5 being the highest). The average answer for this question should be 3.5 or higher. If a 7-point scale is used, the score should be a 5 or higher.

Outcome: 4

Students will be able to effectively analyze real world conflicts at the interpersonal, Organizational, Community, and International level.

Measure: 4.1

Students in COM4804 "Conflict and Communication Context" and COM4806 "Conflict and Communication Case Studies" are required to complete a case-study research & writing assignment in which their understanding and application conflict and communication theory will be evaluated. It is expected that 75% of students will perform at a satisfactory (70% or higher) level on the portion of the assignment related to applying conflict and communication theory.

Measure: 4.2

On the graduating senior survey students will answer the Communication and Conflict program specific questions "Agree or disagree: I am confident in my ability to apply Conflict and Communication theory to better understand real world conflicts" and "Agree or disagree: I am confident in my ability to effectively analyze real world conflicts at the interpersonal, organizational, community, and international level" using a 1-5 likert scale (5 being the highest). The average answer for each of these questions should be 3.5 or higher. If a 7-point scale is used, the score should be a 5 or higher.

Outcome: 5

Students will be able to effectively design conflict interventions at the interpersonal, Organizational, Community, and International level.

Measure: 5.1

Students in COM4804 "Conflict and Communication Context" and COM4806 "Conflict and Communication Case Studies" are required to complete a case-study research & writing assignment in which their understanding and application conflict and communication theory will be evaluated. It is expected that 75% of students will perform at a satisfactory (70% or higher) level on the portion of the assignment related to applying conflict and communication theory.

Measure: 5.2

On the graduating senior survey students will answer the Communication and Conflict program specific questions "Agree or disagree: I am confident in my ability to generate the appropriate intervention strategy for managing or resolving conflict at all conflict levels" and "Agree or disagree: I am confident of my ability to act as a third party in conflict situations, both as an analyst and as a catalyst for managing that

conflict" using a 1-5 likert scale (5 being the highest). The average answer for each of these questions should be 3.5 or higher. If a 7-point scale is used, the score should be a 5 or higher.

Outcome: 6

Students will understand and be able to employ communication behaviors useful in managing and resolving conflict.

Measure: 6.1

Pretest/Post-test using Thomas and Kilmann Conflict Styles Instrument (TK) [see attachment]: A pretest covering using the TK instrument will be administered to Communication and Conflict students in their first semester after declaring for the major. As part of their 'graduation declaration' package, each student will be administered a post-test using the same instrument with questions presented in a different order.

Each student's pre- and post-test scores can be directly compared to show changes manifested in the self-reported conflict styles adopted by the student in question. Each student would be expected to show a more balanced use of the five various styles and a diminished emphasis on the "avoidance" style in particular [note: research with this instrument consistently demonstrates high scores in "avoidance" of conflict as a conflict style for the general population] as demonstrated by a direct comparison of their pre-and post-test style scores.

Measure: 6.2

On the graduating senior survey students will answer the Communication and Conflict program specific questions "Agree or disagree: I have developed a better understanding of my conflict communication style", "Agree or disagree: I have developed a greater skill level in communicating during conflicts" and "Agree or disagree: I am confident of my ability to act as a third party in conflict situations, both as an analyst and as a catalyst for managing that conflict" using a 1-5 likert scale (5 being the highest). The average answer for each of these questions should be 3.5 or higher. If a 7-point scale is used, the score should be a 5 or higher.

Outcome: 7

Students will demonstrate effective writing skills at an appropriate scholarly level.

Measure: 7.1

Students in COM4804 "Conflict and Communication Context" and COM4806 "Conflict and Communication Case Studies" are required to complete a case-study research & writing assignment in which their understanding and application conflict and communication theory will be evaluated. It is expected that 75% of students will perform at a satisfactory (70% or higher) level on the portion of the assignment related to clear and effective writing that conforms to the appropriate formatting style.

Measure: 7.2

On the graduating senior survey students will answer the Communication and Conflict program specific question "Agree or disagree: I am confident in my ability to write effectively in an analytical style in evaluating and understanding a conflicts" using a 1-5 likert scale (5 being the highest). The average answer for this question should be 3.5 or higher. If a 7-point scale is used, the score should be a 5 or higher.

Outcome: 8

Students will understand the basic parameters for conducting research in communication and conflict so as to be able to use such research effectively.

Measure: 8.1

Students will demonstrate understanding of the basic parameters of research through satisfactory completion of the research proposal assignment integral to COM3800. The initial expectation would be that 75% of students will perform at a satisfactory (70% or higher) level.

Measure: 8.2

On the graduating senior survey students will answer the Communication and Conflict program specific question "Agree or disagree: I am confident in my ability to understand and utilize academic research in conflict and communication" using a 1-5 likert scale (5 being the highest). The average answer for this question should be 3.5 or higher. If a 7-point scale is used, the score should be a 5 or higher.

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