

**STMM 550: CREATIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: PAVING THE ROAD TO
PEACE IN A CONFLICTED WORLD**

**SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY/SEATTLE UNIVERSITY
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Course Description:

In this course we will explore the personal, interpersonal and professional challenges of dealing with conflict creatively as a means of peacemaking. Participants will identify their own experiences as well as the strengths and challenges they bring when dealing with difficult situations at home, in all relationships and in ministry. We will study the common sources of conflict with particular attention to communication styles, the impact of change, and individual approaches in responding to conflict. The interconnection between reconciliation and peacemaking is explored later in the week and builds upon the conflict management and leadership skills we will discuss in the first days. We will investigate principles and practices grounded in a holistic spirituality which are expressed in being a change agent, transformational leader and peacemaker. Come to contribute, learn and enjoy!

Course Objectives:

1. Assist students to identify their role as transformational leaders and peacemakers.
2. Explore definitions of conflict and conflict management, transformational leadership and peacemaking.
3. Reflect upon students' unique backgrounds and professions that form their approach to conflict.
4. Examine systems thinking, diversity, culture and co-cultures as they relate to conflict.
5. Reflect on the reality and rate of change in our world and its impact on conflict management, leadership and peacemaking.
6. Increase students' understanding of, appreciation for and capacity to live a wholistic spirituality in the midst of conflict.
7. Engage students in the preparation for and practice of constructive conversations, facilitated conversations and mediated conversations.
8. Practice skills for empowerment, conflict management, respectful communication and professional success.

Course Requirements:

- Required reading: Completed in advance of the first class
- Sharing one symbol of peacemaking or conflict management on Day One
- Participation in class activities, including role plays (1/3 grade)
- 4 –one page Journal entries (1/3 grade)
- Synthesis Paper: 3-4 pages (1/3 grade -- due – Start of Class Nine)

Course Outline:

- CLASS ONE:** The Role of Transforming Leaders in the Midst of Conflict
- A framework for leadership: the 8 Faces
 - Effective leadership in the midst of conflict
 - Spirituality and the peacemaking path
 - The role of non-violence
- CLASS TWO:** You as an Individual Peacemaker and Conflict Manager
- Definitions of peacemaking and peace-building; conflict and conflict management; mediation and facilitation
 - Reflections from the readings
 - Start with yourself: Family of origin -- our initial training in conflict
 - Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument
- CLASS THREE:** Identifying Sources of Conflict
- Ineffective communication
 - Additional sources of conflict: cultural, religious and political diversity
 - Dealing with differences and how leadership matters
 - Neurophysiology and conflict
- CLASS FOUR:** Change, Conflict & Leadership
- Your personal relationship to change and conflict
 - Change and the seeds of conflict
 - Resistance to change and conflict management
 - Skills to be an effective change agent
- CLASS FIVE:** The Many Faces of Conflict Management
- The relationship between conflict resolution and conflict management
 - Negotiation; Mediation; Arbitration
 - Skills and practices of the conflict manager
 - Self-care of the leader as conflict manager
- CLASS SIX:** Conflict Management in Family & Community and How Leaders can Help
- Mediating family disputes
 - Facilitating community conflicts

- Conflict in church settings
- The cost of inaction

- CLASS SEVEN:** Creative Conflict Management
- Being creative in conflicts
 - The role of ritual in reconciliation
 - Similarities and differences among mediation, conflict management and reconciliation
 - Steps to reconciliation and deepening our commitment to forgiveness

- CLASS EIGHT:** Transformational Leadership Toward Forgiveness and Reconciliation
- Spirit of Reconciliation -- Michael Trice
 - Cruelty, forgiveness and reconciliation
 - Implications – personal and professional
 - The grace and cost of transformational leadership

- CLASS NINE:** Conflict Management as the Way to Peace
- Encountering and working with impasse
 - Everyday Creativity
 - Restorative justice and possibilities for healing
 - The Peacemaking Community

- CLASS TEN:** Peacemaking in the Real World
- Learnings from the synthesis papers
 - A Vision of Peace
 - The moral imperative for peace
 - Leader as peacemaker

REQUIRED READING

1. The Paradox of Power From Control to Compassion, by Michael Crosby OFM Cap, 2008
2. Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most, by Stone, Patton, Heed and Fisher, 2010
3. The Crossroads of Conflict: A Journey into the Heart of Dispute Resolution by Kenneth Cloke, 2006
4. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, by Stephen R. Covey, 2004
5. Course Packet: A booklet of primary source reading can be purchased at the Seattle University Reproduction Department located in the basement of the Student Center Annex next to Bellarmine Hall. It is the responsibility of each student to purchase the primary source material for the first day of the course. The cost of reproductions will be incurred by the student.

RECOMMENDED READING

1. Ambassadors of Reconciliation – vol. I, by Ched Meyers and Elaine Enns, 2010
2. Non-violent Communication: a Language of Life, by Marshall Rosenberg, 2008
3. Romero; 1989 DVD, by Paulist Productions
4. Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When the Stakes are High, by Patterson, Greeny, McMillan, Switzler, 2009