

– TPU –

Conflicts at the Micro Level

– TPU –

Content

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(A) Basic Information

- Course Title: Conflicts at the micro level
- Next Term: 12th March- 30th May 2013 (12 weeks)
- Work load: 6/7 hours per week
- Course Instructor: Professor Dr. Kees (CG) van der Veer



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(B) Personal Note:

Professor Dr. Kees (CG) van der Veer

Dr. Kees (C.G.) van der Veer, currently director of the Cultural Studies Foundation in Amsterdam, is a former research fellow from the International Peace Research Institute Oslo and emeritus from VU University in Amsterdam. He studied empirical sociology and (social) psychology in Amsterdam and Groningen, and received his PhD in 1986 with a dissertation on Ideology and Mass Media. He has been lecturing in social research methodology, statistics, communication and organization, psychology, and sociology. His research interests are in topics like: social research methodology, including public opinion research, pre-testing and scaling; organization, communication and conflicts; inequality on the labor market and job mediation; the position of and attitudes toward (illegal) immigration; measuring xenophobia, and factors contributing to it.



Key publications

- (with L. Higler, S. Woelders, R. Ommundsen & R. Pernice) (2012). Developing and validating a cross-national cumulative scale measuring attitudes toward illegal immigrants. *International Journal of Social Research methodology*. DOI 10.1080/13645579.2012.716998.
- (with R. Ommundsen, O. Yakushko, L. Higler, & K.A. Hagen) (2011).
 Psychometrically and Qualitatively Validating a Cross-National Cumulative Measure of Fear-Based Xenophobia. *Quality and Quantity*.
 DOI 10.1007/s11135-011-9599-6.
- (with K.S. Larsen, R. Ommundsen, & K. Krumov) (2011). Organizational Behavior in a Changing World: Managerial and Workers Perspectives. Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers.
- (with Å Hartmann, H. van den Berg, J. Diez-Nicolas, J. Galtung, & H. Wiberg) (2009). *Multidimensional Social Science. An inclusive approach to social position and inequality*. Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers.

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- (with K.S. Larsen and R. Ommundsen) (2008). *Being Human: Relationships and You.* Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers.
- (with T. Hak, & H. Jansen) (2008). The Three-Step Test-Interview: An observational method for pre-testing self-completion questionnaires. *Survey Research Methods, 2* (3), 143-150.
- (with M. Teunisse, A. van Elfrinkhof, G. De Groot, & H. Steenvoorden) (2005).
 DrStat; a statistics course. Utrecht: Digitale Universiteit. <u>www.drstat.net/en</u>



(C) Course Content:

Course Outline

Conflicts at the Micro Level

This course deals with interpersonal conflicts, causes, coping strategies and conflict resolution from a social psychological point of view.

Objectives

The objectives of this course are:

- 1. Getting insight in potential causes of interpersonal conflicts.
- 2. Getting insight in conflicts in organizations and contributing factors.
- 3. Analyzing conflicts and being able to presenting possible solutions.

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Content part one

The first part of the course will deal with potential causes of interpersonal conflicts.

- Attraction and relationships: developing social attachments
- Attitude formation and behavior
- The influence of group membership
- Processes of social influence: Conformity, Compliance and Obedience
- Hostile intergroup behavior: Prejudice, Stereotypes and Discrimination
- Aggression, the common thread of humanity
- Altruism and prosocial behavior
- Morality: Competition, Justice and Cooperation

Content part two

The second part of the course will pay attention to interpersonal conflicts, potential causes, coping strategies and perspectives on conflict resolution in organizations.

- Relationships and conflicts at work
- Organizational power: Politics, gender and Culture
- Conflicts in a cross-cultural perspective
- Conceptions of fairness en of reconciliation

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(D) How is the course designed?:

The course consists of: (1) readings (2) online discussions among participants and instructor, and (3) three individual papers (font size 12, word format) drawn from your personal experience, the readings as well as the discussions accompanying the course. The participants have the opportunity to attend at least six Skype conferences with the instructor (see E), strongly recommended for the completion of the course.

Course material, assignments and schedule

At the start of the course the participants will be offered online course material (in pdf format) to be studied and commented every week.

The material during the first part of the course is partly based on the book *Being Human: Relationships and You. A Social Psychological Analysis*, by K.S. Larsen, R. Ommundsen, & K. Van der Veer (2008). Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers, 2008. The material during the second part is partly based on the book *Organizational Behavior in a Discontinuous World. Managerial and Workers Perspectives*, by K.S. Larsen, K. Van der Veer, R. Ommundsen, & K. Krumov. Amsterdam: Rozenberg, 2011. Additional literature may be advised during the course.

The weekly assignments (papers and comments on the studied literature related to the self-chosen interpersonal conflict in paper 1) need to be sent by e-mail to the instructor and the other participants before Wednesday afternoon, 17.00 Central European Time (CET)). The instructor gives feed-back weekly, visible to all the participants. Every participant is committed to give brief feed-back to the other participants, depending on the number of participants by e-mail. In addition there are at least six Skype conferences (see E).

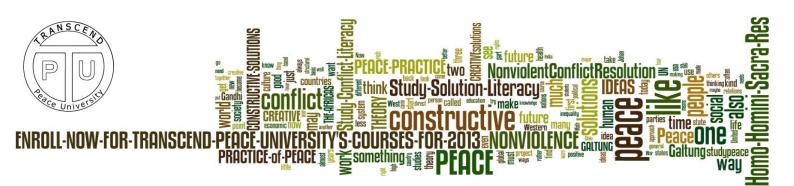
During the second week each participant will provide a paper (paper 1, max. 1000 words) with the outline of an interpersonal conflict casus to be referred to through part one of the course.

At the end of part one (week 8) an individual paper (paper 2, max. 2000 words) will be written in which the relevance will be evaluated of the studied potential causes for the particular conflict that was taken in paper 1 as a point of departure.

At the end of part two (week 12) an individual paper (paper 3, max. 2000 words) will be written in which a casus of a conflict at the micro level in an organization is presented, including causes and (potential) resolutions.

Testimonial

Testimonial is based on the level of participation in discussions and the evaluation of the quality of the three papers.



(E) Course Format

The course is articulated in different modules. These modules include a live discussion-session on Skype every second week, between 60 and 120 minutes maximum, depending on the number of the participants. These (Skype) conferences (live discussion sessions with participants and instructor) will take place every second week on Saturday at 12.00 Central European Time (CET) (or another moment, depending on the geographical location of the participants, to be agreed with all the course participants).

(F) Content Carriers

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All course material will be offered in pdf format

(G) Course Syllabus and Timetable

(Please insert here, what the program for each and every week shall be, including assignments and indicate your availability for Skype sessions -please note that, depending on the geographical location of the students, the latter may have to be adjusted)

- Week 1: Attraction and relationships: developing social attachments
- Week 2: Attitude formation and behavior
- Week 3: The influence of group membership
- Week 4: Processes of social influence: Conformity, Compliance and Obedience
- Week 5: Hostile intergroup behavior: Prejudice, Stereotypes and Discrimination
- Week 6: Aggression, the common thread of humanity
- Week 7: Altruism and prosocial behavior
- Week 8: Morality: Competition, Justice and Cooperation
- Week 9: Relationships and conflicts at work
- Week 10: Organizational power: Politics, gender and Culture
- Week 11: Conflicts in a cross-cultural perspective
- Week 12: Conceptions of fairness en of reconciliation



(H) Study Material and Suggested Readings, videos and websites

The course literature for each module will be accompanied by relevant references. It is strongly advised also to use Google scholar for finding interesting literature related to the modules (as shown in F).

For just one of the many instructions on Internet about how to find literature, see e.g.

http://bigthink.com/age-of-engagement/how-to-search-the-scientific-literature-tips-from-an-expert-librarian

(I) Assignments

Deadlines

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As we adhere to a weekly schedule that includes activities such as Skype-discussions and assignments, we request students respecting the deadlines as shown in section D. In short, weekly comments and feedback, and the requested papers have to be sent to the instructor and the other participants on Wednesday afternoon before 17.00 Central European Time (CET).

