



## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND WORK SCIENCE

### **PV2205 Conflict and collaboration in organizations, 7.5 credits**

Konflikter och samarbete i organisationer, 7,5 högskolepoäng

*Second Cycle*

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#### **Confirmation**

This course syllabus was confirmed by Department of Sociology and Work Science on 2021-11-08 to be valid from 2022-01-17, spring semester of 2022.

*Field of education:* Social Sciences 100%

*Department:* Department of Sociology and Work Science

#### **Position in the educational system**

The course is an in-depth programme course given within the Master Programme in Strategic Human Resource Management and Labour Relations within the Faculty of Social Sciences, or as a freestanding course.

#### *Main field of studies*

Strategic Human Resource Management  
and Labour Relations

#### *Specialization*

A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle  
course/s as entry requirements

#### **Entry requirements**

To be eligible for the course, the student must be accepted to the Master Programme in Strategic Human Resource Management and Labour Relations within the Faculty of Social Sciences, or the Programme for Master in Sociology within the Faculty of Social Sciences alternatively a bachelor's degree in a social or behavioral science field. In addition, language skills corresponding to English B / English 6 are required.

#### **Learning outcomes**

On successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

*Knowledge and understanding*

- describe the concepts, models and theories presented in the course within research field of organizational conflicts to understand and handle these at relational and systemic level
- explain what characterizes a problem-solving culture of cooperation

*Competence and skills*

- diagnose workplace conflict in terms of types of issues, contributing causal factors, degree of escalation and parties' views.
- demonstrate ability to use constructive communication strategies

*Judgement and approach*

- explore and discuss the learning potential of conflicts in workplaces
- critically reflect on the connections between work organization, the culture of cooperation and the organization's potential for conflict

The course is sustainability-related, which means that at least one of the learning outcomes clearly shows that the course content meets at least one of the University of Gothenburg's confirmed sustainability criteria.

**Course content**

Conflicts in organizations are normal and naturally occurring and have the potential to be able to develop both relationships and activities if they are handled (consciously) constructively. Actively working for a solution-oriented collaborative culture promotes good conflict management. The course is especially aimed at HR specialists who support several different roles in their professional practice, but the course content is also highly relevant for managers, project managers, safety representatives, leadership developers and other roles.

The course presents knowledge of and methods for cooperation and conflict management for two important reasons: First, unskillfully managed conflicts can be costly for organizations. Not only in monetary terms but also in terms of efficiency, quality, levels of trust and motivation of both managers and employees as well as staff turnover and health consequences. Second, an organization imbued with a problem-solving mindset and an open and constructive culture of communication is well equipped to maintain organizational learning and creativity, more skillfully manage resistance to change, and develop a stronger ability to adapt to changing circumstances. The course offers a theoretical and methodological framework for understanding, managing and preventing conflicts in workplaces. It also has a strong emphasis on the development of communication skills and other practical skills needed to be able to

support organizations and conflict parties to prevent and navigate conflicts constructively.

### **Form of teaching**

Forms of teaching used in this course include lectures, seminars, individual assignments, group works and practical workshops.

*Language of instruction:* English

### **Assessment**

Analysis of own experienced conflict case. Grading scale: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U).

Analysis and proposal of strategies to handle an organizational conflict presented as case at the course. Grading scale: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U).

Mandatory:

Active attendance at the course workshops and seminars which includes role plays, communication exercises, discussions. Grading scale: Pass (G) Fail (F).

If the student is unable to attend compulsory elements, replacement tasks will be offered

A student who has taken two exams in a course or part of a course without obtaining a pass grade is entitled to the nomination of another examiner. The student needs to contact the department for a new examiner, preferably in writing, and this should be approved by the department unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6 Section 22 of the Higher Education Ordinance).

If a student has received a recommendation from the University of Gothenburg for special educational support, where it is compatible with the learning outcomes of the course and provided that no unreasonable resources are required, the examiner may decide to allow the student to do an adjusted exam or alternative form of assessment.

In the event that a course has ceased or undergone major changes, students are to be guaranteed at least three examination sessions (including the ordinary examination session) over a period of at least one year, but no more than two years, after the course has ceased/been changed. The same applies to placements and professional placements (VFU), although this is restricted to just one additional examination session.

**Grades**

The grading scale comprises: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U).

Take home assessments: Fail (U), Pass (G), Pass with Distinction (VG).

Practical seminars: Fail (U), Pass (G).

To obtain Pass grade the student must have at least Pass in all examinations and attended the practical seminars.

To obtain Pass with Distinction the student must also have Pass with Distinction on both take home assessments.

**Course evaluation**

The course will be evaluated upon completion. The results of the evaluation will be communicated to the students and will function as a guide for the development of the course.