

Helping Normal People Navigate the Curriculum Process

Curriculum Institute – 2013

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What We Will Cover

- Creating a Positive Climate
- The Value of Esprit de Corps
- Building Positive Relationships on Campus
- The Brown Act
- Managing Conflict
- Fostering Teamwork

“Normal People” and Curriculum Process?

Does your Curriculum Committee have an image problem?

The first image that comes up on a Goggle Image search for “curriculum committee meetings” is:



Creating a Positive Climate

- Keep work load reasonable
- Keep reasonable deadlines
- Recognize individual accomplishments
- Establish clear delineations of roles
- Create and follow your local curriculum handbook

Creating a Positive Climate

- Food is good
- Start each meeting with something fun (example, YouTube video example)
- Establish “curriculum humor”
- Gag gifts for the end of the year
- Humor

Creating a Positive Climate

Espirit de Corps

The feeling of contentment and the spirit of devotion and enthusiasm would persist at even higher and more consistent levels if the processes of nurturing and promoting that feeling and that spirit are given adequate attention. It would be fruitful to set into motion an ongoing process for continuous evaluation and reinforcement of the elements of *esprit de corps*. We should not underestimate the value of morale.

Dr. Robert Grosz, *Espirit de Corps (The Value of Morale)*

Definition:

Esprit de corps

- A show of loyalty and attachment to a group with which one identifies.
- Embodies a sense of commitment.
- The energy generated by *esprit de corps* may be self satisfying when it is directed toward oneself in helping to establish an identity.
- The energy may be directed toward a group, such as when one wants to play a participatory role in the group dynamic and function.
- the energy of the *esprit de corps* may allow one to identify with an idea or philosophy which might be symbolic of a group.
- *esprit de corps* can become the force that motivates one to function within any of these.

Establishing Esprit de Corps

1. Personal Elements
2. Group Elements
3. Institutional Elements

Become a “Change Leader”

- Establish a sense of urgency
- Create the guiding coalition
- Develop a change vision
- Communicate the vision for buy-in
- Empower broad-based action
- Generate short-term wins
- Never let up
- Incorporate changes in the culture

Suggested Practices

Build healthy relationships with:

- Your Chief Instructional Officer
- Your Articulation Officer
- Your Academic Senate President
- The person in charge of your college catalog and schedule
- Curriculum Office Staff
- Those responsible for your college's Student Learning Outcomes Facilitator
- **Faculty**

Suggested Practices

Build a Healthy Relationship With Your CIO

- Schedule regular meetings with your CIO.
- Discuss important issues outside of the Curriculum Committee meetings.
- It is completely unproductive for the CIO and the Curriculum Chair to be disagreeing with each other during a committee meeting.
- This does not mean that you will always agree with your CIO or that they just get their way. Curriculum is a primary advice issue and belongs to the faculty. You need to develop a good working relationship with your CIO so that they will understand where you are coming from, when there is room for compromise, and when they will need to defer to the faculty.

Suggested Practices

Build a Healthy Relationship With Your A.O.

- Deadlines
- Transfer issues and degrees
- Agreements, compromises and consensus

Suggested Practices

Build a Healthy Relationship With Your Academic Senate President

- Curriculum Committees operate under the umbrella of the Academic Senate.
- Curriculum Chair should regularly attend Academic Senate meetings.
- Academic Senate President needs to be briefed on curriculum issues.

Suggested Practices

Build a Healthy Relationship With the Person in Charge of Your College Catalog and Schedule

- Deadlines impact curriculum committee agendas

Suggested Practices

Build a Healthy Relationship With Your Curriculum Office Staff

- Left hand must know what the right hand is doing.
- Smooth process to move curriculum from proposal phase to Chancellor's Office approval.
- Submitting new proposals and modifications to CCCCCO.
- Inputting changes into your student enrollment system.
- Prepare submissions for the governing board

Suggested Practices

Build a Healthy Relationship With Your SLO Coordinators/Facilitators

- ACCJC standards speak to the intersection of curriculum and SLOs (give example)
- Need documentation of the collaboration between the two areas

Suggested Practices

Build a Healthy Relationship With Your Local Governing Board

- Attend local board meetings.
- Anticipate Board questions.
- Board approvals.

Suggested Practices

Build a Healthy Relationship With Your **Faculty**

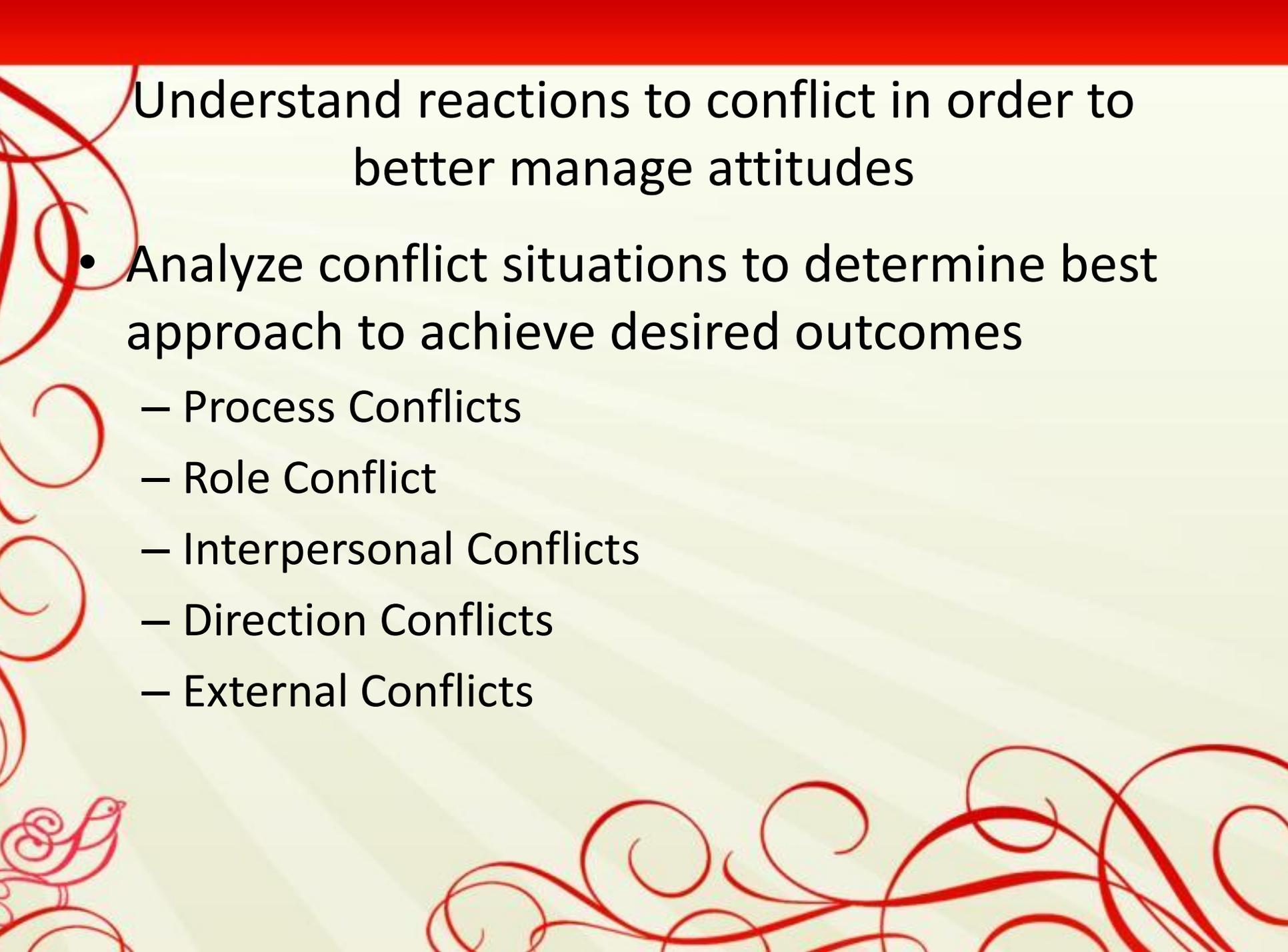
- Faculty tend to only look at their CORs when they are in curriculum review, program review, or want to create a new class.
- Educate the faculty on effective curriculum practice.
- Make yourself available to faculty to answer questions.
- When regulatory changes happen (like repeatability), you need to sit down with affected faculty and explain what is going on and why.

What We Need to Know About the Brown Act

- The Curriculum Committee is subject to the requirements of the Brown Act.
 - All meetings must be open to anyone that wishes to attend.
 - The public must be allowed to make comments.
 - All items being voted on must be included on an agenda that is posted at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.
 - Only a single reading is required but many colleges have two readings.
 - Action can only be taken on items listed for action.
 - Items listed for discussion or from public comments can only be acted on after a motion has passed to suspend the rules

Managing Conflict

- Get comfortable with conflict.
- Conflict can be productive or destructive, depending on how it is handled.
- Listen first. “Listen” to both the content and emotional component of a message and honor both.
- Often these conflicts have little to do with what is being discussed and is really about something else. No matter what this is happening, stay focused on the current issue.
- Remain impartial and remember that you are representing the faculty of your college not just one area.
- You can't make everyone happy. Work with all parties to try and reach a solution that meets as many interests as possible.
- If conflicts happen during a meeting, take back the floor when the discussion gets off topic. Remember that you are in control of the meeting and you need to keep the discussion as civil as possible.



Understand reactions to conflict in order to better manage attitudes

- Analyze conflict situations to determine best approach to achieve desired outcomes
 - Process Conflicts
 - Role Conflict
 - Interpersonal Conflicts
 - Direction Conflicts
 - External Conflicts

Develop conflict resolution strategies that foster teamwork

- Two heads are better than one.
- Teamwork allows group members to share in the tasks at hand, avoiding the possibility of personal responsibility for any error or mistake that may emerge.
- Teamwork also divides the work that needs to be done. A major task can suddenly seem much easier to accomplish when broken down into segments or sub-tasks

Teamwork

- Establish common goals for the year for the curriculum committee; revisit those goals at the end of the year and invite feedback from the committee.
- Make sure each curriculum committee member understands their specific responsibilities on the committee.
- Develop trust.
- Cultivate relationships

Curriculum Chair Suggestions

- Don't be afraid to say, "I'll get back to you about that."
- Do not randomly invoke "Title 5"
- Avoid bias or partiality

Questions?