



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/2014

ELE 3747 Managing conflicts in Norwegian work life

Programme

Elective

Responsible for the course

Bjørn Eriksen

Department

Department of Accounting - Auditing and Law

Term

According to study plan

ECTS Credits

7,5

Language of instruction

Norwegian

Introduction

The course gives an introduction to conflict analysis and management based on international conflict theory and Norwegian employment law. Conflicts constitute an unavoidable part of business activities and employment relationships. Conflicts may become destructive and inflict financial and other costs on individuals, groups and organizations if great interests are at stake and the procedures and competence for dealing with conflicts are inadequate. Good routines and attitudes to conflict management promote job satisfaction, productivity and may stimulate creativity and innovation. Consequently, it is of great importance for everyone who is involved in working life to be able to understand and deal with conflicts. The course will provide the students with a thorough insight into theories that are central to understanding the basis for conflicts, how conflicts arise and develop, and how conflicts may be dealt with in ways that take care of individuals, groups and organizations. At the same time the course deals with rules, guidelines and practice related to conflict management in Norwegian working life, within the framework of both collective and individual employment law. The course combines professional perspectives from law and psychology that are particularly relevant to working life in Norway, and thus is adapted to all BI programmes.

Learning outcome

- A good understanding of selected theories and research findings related to conflicts, including the background, structure and elements of conflicts, how conflicts arise and develop, and how conflicts may be managed in ways that take care of individuals, groups and organizations.
- Knowledge of selected parts of regulations and practice for conflict management in Norwegian working life within the

Acquired knowledge

On completion of the course the students are to have acquired:

- framework of both the individual and collective part of employment law.
 - Knowledge of the interaction between law and psychology in theory and practice in connection with conflict management
- Acquired skills**
On completion of the course the students are to be able to:
- Identify and analyse selected problems related to the understanding and management of conflicts and to account for central theories and research findings within the relevant parts of the theory of conflict.
 - Account for selected aspects of the central provisions of the Working Environment Act regarding conflict management in Norwegian workplaces.
 - Account for selected parts of the regulations and practice for dealing with conflicts in collective employment law.
 - Carry out an analysis and assessment of concrete working-life conflicts based on cases.

Reflection

On completion of the course the students are expected to:

- Have developed abilities for reflection on alternatives ways of dealing with conflicts that may take care of the goals and interests of individuals, groups and organizations.
- Have developed an ability to see the ethical aspects of different ways of dealing with conflicts.
- Be familiar with the relationship between law and ethics in connection with conflict management, including the possible existence of ethical expectations beyond the clearly defined rules, and have a conscious attitude to the way such dilemmas may be solved in practice.

Prerequisites

ORG 3402 Organizational Behaviour and Management or equivalent.

Compulsory reading

Books:

Blandhol, Sverre. 2013. Veier til løsning. Analyse og håndtering av konflikter. Fagbokforlaget

Other:

Jakhelln, Henning. 2009. «Arbeidsretten», i Knophs oversikt over Norges rett. 13. Universitetsforlaget. s. 545-581

Recommended reading

Books:

Deutsch, Morton m.fl.. 2006. The Handbook of Conflict Resolution. 2nd ed. Jossey-Bass

Pruitt, Dean G. and Sung Hee Kim. 2004. Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement. 3rd ed. McGraw Hill

Course outline

- Conflict and conflict management in Norwegian working life
- Basic conflict analysis: the elements of conflicts, parties to conflicts, scope of conflicts, conflict types, conflict dimensions
- Emotions in connection with conflicts
- Power and social roles in connection with conflicts
- Trust: the establishment of trust and restoring trust
- Communication and conflicts
- The development of conflicts: perspective, strategy, process and tactics
- Escalation, de-escalation and termination of conflicts
- Change processes and conflicts
- Constructive controversies
- Negotiations, conciliation, alternative conflict resolution

Computer-based tools

No special computer-based tools are used for this course.

Learning process and workload

The course consists of 45 hours of teaching of which 25 hours are ordinary lectures and 20 hours are set aside for cases and practical exercises.

The teaching method presupposes that prior to each lecture the students acquaint themselves with the relevant reading material and any relevant rules of law. On the whole, only central problems of the syllabus will be dealt with and elaborated on during lectures. Parts of the syllabus content must be acquired through self-study. The distribution of the different topics dealt with in lectures and seminars will appear from the schedule of lectures.

Recommended use of time for the

students:

Activity	Hours
Class participation	25
Participation in seminars	20
Preparation for classes	45
Self-study/the study of literature	75
Work on cases/exercises	30
Examination	5
Recommended total use of time	200

Use of hours

Examination

The course is concluded by a 5-hour individual written examination.

Examination code(s)

ELE 37471 – Written examination counts 100 % towards the grade in the course ELE 3747 Managing conflicts in Norwegian work life, 7.5 credits.

Examination support materials

A collection of Norwegian laws, an offprint of the Working Environment Act. Apart from this no support materials are allowed in connection with the examination.

Re-sit examination

A re-sit examination is offered in connection with the next ordinary course.

Additional information