



UPPER IOWA
UNIVERSITY

COURSE SYLLABUS

EDGD 503-3 Better Conversations
Online, Self-Paced

Online: Online classroom located at uiulearn.uiu.edu

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Allan Nelson, Ed.D
UIU Faculty Email: nelsona448@uiu.edu
Telephone Number: Available upon request.
Availability: Email or text 24/7. Zoom conferences available upon request.

Course Description

Catalog Course Description

This is an online course designed to be self-paced. Students will develop strategies to improve conversation skills. Students will have the opportunity to respond to the text, and other resources, by writing essays on each chapter. Students will also research other resources relevant to the topic and their educational responsibilities as they reflect and provide an action plan for implementation of their learning. This course is designed to be practical, relevant, and beneficial to teaching professionals.

Prerequisites: None

Credit Hours: 1 credit graduate semester course

As a requirement of HLC Accreditation, all UIU courses, regardless of meeting schedule or instructional mode, follow the Federal Credit Hour Definition. As such, each credit hour earned at UIU is equivalent to a minimum of 45 hours of student engagement.

For more information on how specific instructional modes meet this requirement, please see *UIU's Policy Guidelines for Instructional Time Expectations*: [UIU Policies](#).

Course Materials

It is the student's responsibility to make sure she/he has access to all required course materials by the start of the session.

Required Textbooks

Knight, J. (2016). *Better Conversations: Coaching Ourselves And Each Other To Be More Credible, Caring, and Connected*. CORWIN Press. ISBN: 978-1-5063-0745-9

Recommended Resources

APA formatting is required for this course. You can find information regarding APA formatting at the [Writing Center website](#).

[Academic Resources](#) for UIU Students

Ordering Textbooks

Purchase your textbook through the online university bookstore, [MBS Direct](#), or by phone at (800) 325-3252.

Course Objectives

1. Read and evaluate six beliefs that lead to better conversations.
2. Research relevant resources to learn effective habits that strengthen communication skills.
3. Learn strategies to handle difficult conversations with colleagues.
4. Reflect on personal communication strategies and areas to improve.

Program Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to read and evaluate educational research.
2. Students will be able to demonstrate effective leadership decision making and analytical skills.

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

Participation

All work is to be completed online. Enrollment starts at the beginning of each month. Students have six months to complete the self-paced work.

Course Policies

The first assignment is due in 45 days from the course start date maintain active enrollment in the course. The instructor must respond with graded feedback of the first assignment within 60 days of the course start date. Failure to meet these requirements will result in Administrative Withdrawal (AW).

Assignments/Assessments

Students are required to read the required textbook and respond to each essay question. Each essay typically is a minimum of 1.5-2 pages in length. Upon completion, the work is submitted to the instructor via uiulearn.uiu.edu.

Chapter 1 Preview- In the first chapter, Jim Knight explains why he wrote *Better Conversations*. He also explains it in this [interview](#). What inspired you to want to take this course? Which chapter or conversation/belief do you most look forward to learning about? What is your desired outcome upon completing this course?

Chapter 2- Chapter two focuses on six beliefs that lead to better conversations. Use the text to summarize each belief. Which belief do you currently struggle with?

the most? Why? Link a resource that provides strategies to help improve in this area. Please cite your resources by using APA Guidelines.

Chapter 3- To have better conversations, the book states we need to listen with empathy. How is the book similar to [William Ury's TedTalk](#)? What new ideas does the video offer that was not mentioned in the book? How will this information help you become a better teacher?

Chapter 4- Which of the five advocacy strategies do you feel are a strength for you and which strategy do you want to focus on to improve? Why? Which of the four inquiry strategies are you the best and which strategy do you want to focus on to improve? Why? What research supports the effectiveness of these strategies?

Please cite your resources by using APA Guidelines.

Chapter 5- After reading chapter five, watch [Dan Moulthrop TedTalk](#) and [Mike Vaughan TedTalk](#). What advice do all three sources share about asking questions to create better conversations? Which suggestions made the biggest impact on you? Reflect on a conversation you had that could have gone deeper had you asked better questions.

Chapter 6 and 7- On a scale from 1-10, with ten being the most important, how important is building relationships, as it relates to conversations? How does the book suggest we improve relationships? What does other research suggest? Justify your ranking using evidence from the text and other resources. Please cite your resources by using APA Guidelines.

Chapter 8- What strategies does Jim Knight share to help you redirect a toxic conversation? Using what you learned, complete the form on page 178 that allows you to look back on a previous toxic conversation and describe how you would handle the situation differently today. Please include the completed form.

Chapter 9- Meaningful conversations cannot happen without trust. How can you build trust with your colleagues? How can you build trust with your students? How does trust impact student learning? Link articles that supports your response? Please cite your resources by using APA Guidelines.

Reflection and Action Plan- Complete the [Communication Profile](#). What areas do you currently see as communication strengths? What areas do you wish to improve? Specifically describe your plan of action to improve your conversation skills. What strategies does the book offer to help with these improvements?

Grading Criteria

The course letter grade will be based on the following grading criteria:

Activity	Points
Chapter 1 Essay	10

Chapter 2 Essay	10
Chapter 3 Essay	10
Chapter 4 Essay	10
Chapter 5 Essay	10
Chapter 6 Essay	10
Chapter 7 Essay	10
Chapter 8 Essay	10
Chapter 9 Essay	10
Reflection and Action Plan	10
Total Points:	100

Grading Scale

This course will use the following scale:

Letter Grade	Points
A	93-100
A- (minus)	90-92
B+	88-89
B	82-87
B- (minus)	80-81
C+	78-79
C	72-77
C- (minus)	70-71
F	0-69

Grades and Feedback

The instructor will typically send grades with feedback via email within 3-4 days of the completed work being turned in. The instructor will typically rely to all emails within 24 hours.

Turnitin

Turnitin is a tool for both teachers and students to ensure academic integrity by checking originality of submitted papers to avoid issues of plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Students should be aware that Turnitin scans submitted work and compares it to ALL other sources on file.

Incompletes

Occasionally it becomes necessary for an instructor to award a student a grade of incomplete ("I"). An incomplete grade is exceptional and given only to students whose complete coursework has been qualitatively satisfactory but who have been unable to complete all course requirements because of documented cases of injury, illness, death in family, personal crisis, military deployments, or other circumstances beyond their control. This grade should not

be awarded in cases where the student “fell behind” due to absences without explanation, other class commitments, and/or work obligations.

Course Schedule

This self-paced course must be completed within six months from the start date.

Course Expectations

Email

Upper Iowa University employees and students are issued an UIU email account (doej@uiu.edu). University email communications will only be sent to UIU email address. Faculty and staff are not obligated to respond to students using non-UIU email accounts.

Technology Requirements

Students and faculty should have access to a reliable up-to-date computer, updated virus protection, and an Internet connection to access course materials and complete course activities.

Professional Writing and Speaking Guidelines

Communications in class and online should follow the Student Conduct and Discipline, Respect for the University Environment, and Code of Student Responsibility in the [Student Handbook](#) (pg. 20 and 21). Respect the opinions of others using appropriate language and communications.

University Policies

Validation of Enrollment/Non-Attendance

Registration for each course must be validated by attending at least one of the first three class sessions. For classes meeting twice per week, you must attend the first, second or third session. For classes meeting once per week, you must attend either the first week or the second week. Failure to validate enrollment when courses begin will result in a grade of NA (never attended) and removal from the course.

Withdrawal (W)

8-Week Course: To withdraw from an active course, notify your academic advisor prior to the last day to drop a class, which is the last day of the fifth week of the session. A grade of **W** will be recorded on the transcript. Informing the course instructor is not sufficient notice for a drop or withdrawal.

Administrative Withdrawal (AW)

Online: At least one complete assignment must be received and verified by the instructor within the first 60 days of enrollment. Therefore, students should turn in at least one assignment within 45 days from the start of the course. If this is not met, the instructor will request to have a grade of AW recorded on the student’s permanent record.

Academic Accommodations

It is the policy of Upper Iowa University to ensure equal access to educational and co-curricular activities to students with disabilities as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A student seeking accommodations should contact the Director of Disability Services (DDS) as early in the session as possible. In order to receive accommodations, students must disclose their disability to the DDS by completing a *Voluntary Disclosure Form*, as well as providing appropriate documentation. The *Voluntary Disclosure Form* is available in the DDS office or online at [Disability Services](#). Students will be given a *Request for Accommodations Contract* during their initial appointment with the DDS. **This appointment will be in person for Fayette campus students and over the phone for center, online, and self-paced students.** It is the student's responsibility to provide the instructors with a copy of the *Request for Accommodations Contract* (for Center or online students, these contracts are emailed out to instructors by the DDS for the student). Additionally, students should work cooperatively with their instructors throughout the session to make sure that appropriate accommodations are being made. You can contact the DDS at (563) 425-5949, disabilityservices@uiu.edu, or stop by the office in the Student Center, Office of Student Life, Room 229.

Academic Misconduct Policy

Cheating, academic dishonesty, and plagiarism constitute a violation of the offender's own integrity, as well as the integrity of the entire University; they will not be tolerated. Violators will receive sanctions based on the level of academic misconduct.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- The use of unauthorized books notes or other sources in the giving or securing of help in an examination or other course assignments.
- The copying of other students' work or allowing others to copy your work. The submission of work that is not your own or allowing others to submit your work as theirs.
- The submission of the same work for two or more classes without the approval of instructors involved.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Sharing academic materials knowing they will be used inappropriately.
- Accessing another person's work without permission.
- Providing false or incomplete information on an academic document.
- Changing student records without approval.
- Obtaining and using texts or other materials intended for instructor use only.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- The presentation of another's published or unpublished work as one's own.
- Taking words or ideas of another and either copying them or paraphrasing them without proper citation of the source.
- Using charts, graphs, statistics or tables without proper citation.

Levels of Academic Misconduct and Sanctions

The faculty member teaching the course has the primary responsibility for resolving allegations of academic dishonesty, though egregious violations will be resolved by the School administration, the Academic Misconduct Board, or some combination thereof. The final decision on the level of a violation rests with the Academic Misconduct Board. Options for

resolving an alleged case of academic dishonesty range from dismissing the allegation with no negative sanction to being expelled from the university ([Academic Misconduct Policy: Table 1](#)). A negative sanction is defined as an action taken by the faculty member that affects the student's grade for the assignment or his or her cumulative grade for the course. Anytime academic misconduct is detected, the procedures outlined in [Academic Misconduct Policy: Table 1](#) should be followed. The incident will be maintained in a searchable database maintained by the Office of Academic Affairs.

Copyright Statement

In recognition of the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code), Upper Iowa University reminds both faculty members and learners that a willful infringement of the law may result in disciplinary action. The University library has available materials discussing the "fair use" concept, along with criteria and guidelines for reproduction and use of copyrighted materials.

This syllabus is subject to change.

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