

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

(PH.D SEMINAR)

COM 7933 | CRN: 24986

This seminar will focus on understanding the nature and outcomes of difficult conversations, or ones in which the topics being discussed are emotionally charged and/or socially stigmatized, and participants perceive they have little in common, struggle to figure out what to say, and/or project that the outcomes of talk are likely to be negative. The course will be organized into three parts that explore: (a) theories that can help us analyze difficult conversations (e.g., multiple goal theories, intergroup perspectives, frameworks focused on listening/dialogue/intractable conflict/stigma, critical perspectives such as relational dialectics), (b) topics/contexts in which difficult conversations occur (e.g., talking about death or mental health, conversations about race/politics), and (c) interventions that attempt to bridge divides or improve the quality of difficult conversations (e.g., NPR's "One Small Step: Courageous Conversations Across a Growing Divide" program). Students will work on a final project that might take various formats such as a literature/review critique, research prospectus, analysis of existing data, or review of multiple books addressing a theme pertinent to the class.

**Grad students from outside the Communication Department must contact the instructor to request permission to take this course.*

SPRING 2021

Wednesday 2:00 PM – 4:45 PM

Online synchronous

INSTRUCTOR: DR. STEVE WILSON
(WILSON52@USF.EDU)