

PADM 4000-400
Mediation
SUMMER 2026 – 10-Week Online Session

Instructor: Ahmed Eraky, Ph.D. (ABD)

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Office Hours: Online on Tuesday, 1 pm–3 pm / Thursday, 10 am–12 pm, or By Appointment

Class Modality

This course is an asynchronous, fully online 10-week summer course delivered through UNT Canvas. Students may work at their own pace within a structured weekly timeline. Each module will open at the beginning of its assigned week. Course instructions are based on scheduled online materials presented in Canvas modules. The instructor holds synchronous online office hours, though participation is not required and does not affect the grade.

Course Description

The course focuses on the fundamentals of non-litigation-based conflict resolution and mediation strategies for a variety of settings. Students further develop their conflict resolution skills through assigned readings, quizzes, written assignments, videos, and online discussions and instruction. Mediation is a communication tool for resolving differences. Mediation is often described as a process that helps conflicting parties reach a mutually acceptable resolution. A higher goal of mediation is to help parties experience its transformative potential so they can learn to solve their own problems in the future. From either perspective, mediation is a process—i.e., a series of well-defined steps through which the mediator guides parties in conflict. The course satisfies the requirements of the Texas ADR Statute (TEXAS CIVIL PRACTICE & REMEDIES CODE, CHAPTER 154. ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES; Acts 1987, 70th Leg., Ch. 1121, sec. 1, eff. June 20, 1987, as amended).

Course Objectives

- **Understand Mediation Fundamentals:** Grasp the core principles, stages, and distinctions of mediation compared to other dispute resolution methods.
- **Develop Effective Communication Skills:** Enhance abilities in active listening, questioning, and non-verbal communication within mediation contexts.
- **Apply Conflict Analysis and Resolution Strategies:** Analyze conflicts to identify underlying interests and employ negotiation strategies for mutually beneficial outcomes.
- **Navigate Ethical and Professional Responsibilities:** Comprehend the ethical obligations of mediators, including confidentiality, neutrality, and appropriate referrals.
- **Manage Dynamics and Emotions in Mediation:** Address power imbalances, cultural differences, and heightened emotions to facilitate constructive dialogue.
- **Draft and Finalize Mediation Agreements:** Create clear, enforceable, and feasible mediated settlement agreements acceptable to all parties.

Reading Materials

- Beer, Jennifer E. and Packard, Caroline C., *The Mediator's Handbook* (Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers), 2012. ISBN: 978-0-86571-722-0 (paperback).
- Fisher & Ury, *Getting to Yes*, (New York: Penguin Books), 2011. ISBN: 9780143118756 (paperback).

Class Activities and Grading Items

1. Discussion Postings (50 points × 4 postings = 200)

You are required to participate in four graded discussion postings, each worth 50 points, totaling 200 points. These discussions are designed to deepen your understanding of the assigned readings and foster an interactive learning environment.

NOTE: Your initial post is due by 11:59 PM on Wednesday of the assigned week, and you must respond to at least one classmate's post by 11:59 PM on Saturday of the same week. Timely participation is crucial, as it allows for meaningful engagement and dialogue. Your contributions will be evaluated based on the quality of your insights, the relevance to the readings, and adherence to deadlines.

To ensure a respectful and productive online discussion, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Be respectful:** Maintain a respectful tone in all posts and responses. Critique ideas, not individuals.
- **Stay on topic:** Ensure your contributions are relevant to the discussion prompt and course material.
- **Be concise:** Express your thoughts clearly and concisely, avoiding overly lengthy posts.
- **Proofread:** Review your posts for clarity, grammar, and spelling before submitting.
- **Cite sources:** When referencing course materials or external sources, provide appropriate citations.

2. Quizzes (50 points × 6 quizzes = 300)

Throughout this course, you will complete six quizzes, each valued at 50 points, designed to assess your understanding of the material covered in each module. These quizzes will feature a combination of multiple-choice questions and essay-based prompts, allowing you to demonstrate both your knowledge and analytical skills. Each quiz is due by 11:59 PM on Sunday of its assigned week. All quizzes open on Thursday at 7:00 AM and close the following Sunday at 11:59 PM.

Note: Always refer to the course syllabus and Canvas announcements for any updates or changes to the quiz schedule or submission guidelines.

3. Short Paper Assignments (150 points × 2 papers = 300)

You will complete two short paper assignments, each worth 150 points, scheduled for Week 4 and Week 7. These assignments involve case analyses, with detailed guidelines provided within the respective modules. Each paper is due by 11:59 PM on Sunday, concluding the

module period. Timely submission is essential, as late submissions may incur penalties as outlined in the course syllabus.

4. Final Project Paper (200 points)

The final project paper is a significant component, valued at 200 points, and is due by 11:59 PM on Friday, July 24, 2026. Detailed instructions and guidelines are provided in Week 10. No late submissions will be accepted due to university grading deadlines.

Grading

A	1000–900
B	899–800
C	799–700
D	699–600
F	599 and lower

Submissions

Submissions should be through Canvas on the respective assignment page unless notified otherwise. You can generally expect assignments to be graded within one week of the deadline.

Late/Make-up Exams and Assignments

- **Timely Submission:** Assignments must be submitted by the specified due dates to receive full credit.
- **Late Submission Penalty:** Late assignments will incur a 10% deduction past the due date.
- **Student Responsibility:** It is the student's responsibility to inform Dr. Eraky immediately upon submitting late work to Canvas; otherwise, it will not be graded.
- **Acceptance Period for Late Work:** Late submissions are accepted up to one week (7 days) after the original due date; assignments submitted beyond this period will receive a grade of zero.
- **Final Project Exception:** The final project paper, due on July 24, is exempt from the late submission policy; no extensions or late submissions will be accepted due to university grading deadlines.
- **Communication:** If you anticipate difficulty meeting a deadline, contact the instructor in advance to discuss possible accommodation.

Canvas

Canvas will be used to supplement work on this course. Checking Canvas frequently is advised to stay abreast of all announcements and changes. On occasion, the instructor will send emails to the entire class via UNT student-assigned email accounts.

Academic Dishonesty: Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism

The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline defines cheating and plagiarism as the use of unauthorized books, notes, or otherwise securing help in a test; copying other's tests, assignments, reports, or term papers; representing the work of another as one's own; collaborating without authority with another student during an examination or in preparing academic work; or otherwise practicing scholastic dishonesty.

Penalties: Normally, the minimum penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a grade of "F" in the course. Determination of cheating or plagiarism shall be made by the instructor. Cases may be referred to the departmental Curriculum and Degree Programs Committee. In all cases, the Dean of Students shall be informed in writing of the case.

Appeals: Students may appeal decisions under this policy by following the procedure laid down in the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

Policy on Generative AI Use

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Grammarly) may be used in this course as a support tool, subject to the following expectations:

- **Student Authorship:** All required papers and assignments must be authored by the student. Central content, arguments, and analysis must originate from your own engagement with assigned materials.
- **Appropriate Uses:** AI may be used to brainstorm ideas, check grammar and clarity, assist in revising for flow, or help identify potential research directions. AI may not serve as the originating source of content in your papers.
- **Verification and Accountability:** Students are responsible for verifying the accuracy of any information produced with AI tools.
- **Complement, Not Substitute:** AI should be used as a complementary tool, never a replacement for engaging deeply with course readings, cases, and scholarly research.

Unauthorized or undisclosed AI use that substitutes for student thinking will be considered academic dishonesty.

Special Needs

The Department of Public Administration, in cooperation with the Office of Disability Accommodation, complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request during regular office hours before the 12th class day of regular semesters.

Course Schedule and Assignments

Note: All due dates refer to 11:59 PM CST on the date listed. Quizzes open Thursday at 7:00 AM and close Sunday at 11:59 PM of the same week.

Module 1: Course Introduction & Conflict, Communication, and Mediator Strategies 1 May 18–24, 2026

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of course expectations; self-introduction to classmates• Mediator's Handbook: Overview (pp. 1–12) and Understanding Conflict (pp. 79–92)• Conflict Resolution Article: Pages 1–9• Getting to Yes: Chapters 1–5
Assessments	Discussion Posting 1 – Submit your introduction by Wednesday, May 20; reply to at least one classmate by Saturday, May 23. Quiz 1 – Submit by Sunday, May 24, 11:59 PM.

Week 2: Conflict, Communication, and Mediator Strategies 2 & 3 May 25–31, 2026

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mediator's Handbook – The Toolbox: Supporting the People, Facilitating the Process, Solving the Problem• Getting to Yes: Chapters 1–8 (complete)
Assessments	Quiz 2 – Submit by Sunday, May 31, 11:59 PM. Quiz 3 – Submit by Sunday, May 31, 11:59 PM.

Module 3: Advanced Mediator Strategies & Ethical Guidelines for Mediators in Texas 1 June 1–7, 2026

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Development of Ethical Guidelines and Mediator Credentialing in Texas• Texas ADR Statute• Supreme Court of Texas – Family Violence
Assessment	Discussion Posting 2 – Submit by Wednesday, June 3; reply to at least one classmate by Saturday, June 6.

Module 4: Ethical Guidelines for Mediators in Texas 2 & Writing Assignment 1 June 8–14, 2026

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three cases that demonstrate ethical dilemmas in mediation (provided in Canvas)
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Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Module learning contents – Mediation cases for ethical analysis <p>Note: Review and prepare responses to each ethical dilemma case before completing the writing assignment.</p>
	<p>Writing Assignment 1: Ethical Analysis of Mediation Cases – Submit by Sunday, June 14, 11:59 PM.</p>

Module 5: Stages of Mediation June 15–21, 2026	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mediator’s Handbook – Getting to the Table; The Mediation Session Part I: Exploring the Situation and Part II: Reaching Resolution Stages of Mediation handout Opening Statement outline handout Initial Caucus handout
Assessment	<p>Quiz 4 – Submit by Sunday, June 21, 11:59 PM.</p>

Module 6: Mediation Process – Pre-Mediation & Opening Session Stages June 22–28, 2026	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mediator’s Handbook – The Process: Getting to the Table Mediator’s Handbook – The Process: The Mediation Session Part I: Exploring the Situation Mediator’s Opening Statement outline
Assessments	<p>Discussion Posting 3 – Submit by Wednesday, June 24; reply to at least one classmate by Saturday, June 27.</p> <p>Discussion Posting 4 – Submit a response to the Opening Session prompt by Wednesday, June 24; reply to at least one classmate by Saturday, June 27.</p>

Module 7: Mediation Process – Initial Caucus & Writing Assignment 2 June 29–July 5, 2026	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributions of Caucusing and Pre-Caucusing to Mediation by Gregorio Billikopf Mediation – Initial Caucus Handout (2018) What is a BATNA? What Can It Do For You? What’s in Your Toolbox? Example statement and writing assignment instructions (Canvas)

Assessment	Writing Assignment 2: Reflecting on the Initial Caucus – Submit by Sunday, July 5, 11:59 PM.
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Module 8: Mediation Process – Negotiation Stage July 6–12, 2026

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediator’s Handbook – The Process: The Mediation Session Part II: Reaching Resolution (pp. 55–92) • Getting to Yes – All Chapters (review/synthesis)
Assessment	Quiz 5 – Submit by Sunday, July 12, 11:59 PM.

Module 9: Mediation Process – Securing Agreement July 13–19, 2026

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediator’s Handbook – The Process: The Mediation Session Part II: Reaching Resolution (pp. 68–78)
Assessment	Quiz 6 – Submit by Sunday, July 19, 11:59 PM.

Module 10: Final Project – Comprehensive Mediation Case Study July 20–24, 2026

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 10 Learning Contents (Canvas) • Three Cases for final project analysis (Canvas) • Example Final Project document (Canvas)
Assessment	Final Project Paper – Submit by Friday, July 24, 2026, 11:59 PM. NOTE: No late submissions will be accepted for the final project due to university grading deadlines. The submission link is provided in the Week 10 module.

Grading Summary

Assignment	Points Each	Total
Discussion Postings (4)	50	200
Quizzes (6)	50	300
Short Paper Assignments (2)	150	300
Final Project Paper (1)	200	200
TOTAL		1,000