Professor’s Contact Information
- Sharon Corsentino, Adjunct Faculty
- Office location - CHEC, TBD
- Class location – CHEC, room 218
- Phone (214) 423-5105 Fax (214) 423-5111
- UNT Office hours – Wednesdays 5:30 pm- 5:55 pm or by appointment – will be held at the CHEC – room number TBD. Until room is assigned, please look for me in the area on the second floor near the student lounge.
- When communicating electronically about the course, please communicate with the instructor only in the Blackboard Messages tab.

About the Professor / Instructor
Ms. Corsentino is an attorney and mediator whose legal practice encompasses primarily family law matters, including divorce, child custody, child support, adoption, termination, and grandparent rights; her mediation practice is almost exclusively family disputes.

Materials – Text, Readings, Supplementary Readings
- Required texts
  1. Renegotiating Family Relationships: Divorce, Child Custody and Mediation
     Robert E. Emery
     Second edition; 2012; The Guilford Press
  2. Texas Family Code
     West’s Texas Statutes and Codes; 2016 Edition
     West Publishing
     ISBN: 9780314672452
- Supplementary readings – as assigned

Course Description
The course focuses on the fundamentals of non-litigation-based conflict resolution and negotiation strategies used when restructuring families during divorce, at the end of intimate partnerships or modifying previously negotiated terms relating to these. Students have the opportunity to further develop their mediation skills appropriate for these issues through assigned readings, written assignments, exercises, role play simulations, discussion boards, videos and classroom instruction.
**Instructional Methods**
Instruction consists of classroom lectures, discussions, activities, instructor’s and other videos and written materials relating to written exercises, assignments, role play simulations, discussion boards, group work and written exams. This is a face-to-face course with some online content.

**Course Requirements**

**Reading assignments:** Each week’s reading assignment must be completed prior to completion of all required work.

**Exercises:** Students must read or view the material provided and complete the exercise. Each exercise assigned will be graded. Failure to complete and submit assignments by the due date will result in appropriate reductions in final grades.

**Discussion Boards:** Discussion boards are assigned to stimulate critical thinking about negotiation. Students will be graded on the quality of their posts.

**Court Observation:** Students are required to observe a minimum of two hours of family court cases in Collin, Denton, or Dallas Counties.

**Written Assignment:** Students must write a paper regarding their observation of family law court.

**Final:** There will be a graded final in this course.

**Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes**
At the end of this course, the student will:

1. **Understand** theories, research and literature relating to conflict, its resolution and their application to family mediation.
2. **Understand** the consequences of separation/divorce for adults and children.
3. **Demonstrate** the ability to screen for appropriateness of mediation, including knowledge and ability to screen for domestic violence and an awareness of appropriate response(s) when domestic violence or its potential has been identified.
4. **Demonstrate** the ability to facilitate problem solving between the parties, especially in the areas of divorce including, but not limited to, parenting, support, division of assets/liabilities, insurance, tax filings, and the like.
5. **Demonstrate** the ability to work with the substantive information encountered in separation/divorce mediation.
6. **Demonstrate** the ability to recognize when the assistance of other professionals might be helpful to the mediation process and to facilitate this discussion with the parties.
Teaching Philosophy
I am eager to engage students who are enrolled in a 4000-level course because they are independent learners and thinkers and who are eager to improve and further develop their conflict resolution skills.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS / ASSISTANCE
The following information has been provided to assist you in preparation for the technological aspect of the course.

- Hardware and software necessary to use Blackboard Learn: http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk
- Browser requirements: http://kb.blackboard.com/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=84639794
- Computer and Internet Literacy: http://clt.odu.edu/oso/index.php?src=pe_comp_lit
- Necessary plug-ins: http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/bblearn/
- Internet Access with compatible web browser
- Headset/Microphone (if required for synchronous chats)
- Word Processor

ACCESS & NAVIGATION
Access and Log in Information
The course was developed and will be facilitated utilizing the University of North Texas Learning Management System, Blackboard Learn. To get started with the course, please go to: https://learn.unt.edu

You will need your EUID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your EUID or have forgotten your password, please go to: http://ams.unt.edu.

Student Resources
As a student, you will have access to:
- Student Orientation via Blackboard Learn. It is recommended that you become familiar with the tools and tutorials within the Orientation to better equip you in navigating the course.
- It is recommended that you become familiar with the tools and tutorials to better equip you to navigate the course.

Being a Successful Online Student
- What Makes a Successful Online Student?
- Self Evaluation for Potential Online Students
What Should Students Do First?

2. Students should submit the following information to the instructor via a Blackboard Message the first week of class:

   Student ID
   EUID
   Best phone number and email address for emergency alerts

How Students Should Proceed Each Week for Class Activities

Students should access Blackboard daily for announcements and messages regarding the course.

Student Support

The University of North Texas provides student technical support in the use of Blackboard and supported resources. The student help desk may be reached at:

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
Phone: (940) 565-2324
In person: Walk-ins @ Sage Hall (Room 130)

Regular hours are maintained to provide support to students. Please refer to the website (http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/hours.htm) for updated hours.

Communication

Information about the communication tools in the course and how they will be used:

Blackboard Messages
For all course-related questions, please read this syllabus carefully before seeking assistance. You must use the Message function in Blackboard for all electronic communications with your professor about the course. Should we communicate by phone, please expect to see a confirmation message from me.

Students can expect a response from the instructor within 24-hours of sending a message during business hours. If your concern is urgent during business hours, please call the office number provided and speak by phone or leave a message. BbL messages may not be answered during the weekend.

Blackboard Announcements
Please check the Announcements frequently for updated information and changes.
The Golden Rule Applies: Please extend the receiver of your message the same courtesy you would expect to receive when communicating. Please read and consider the content of the message before responding. Profanity and insults will not be tolerated.

Assessments / Grading
Assessments
This course will utilize the following instruments to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes for the course:
- Exercises
- Group exercises / role play simulations / class discussions
- Discussion boards
- Written assignment
- Final assignment

Assignments/Exercises
Participating in class exercises allows students to earn participation credit. Online exercises are not timed and attempts are limited to the number provided in each assignment. A grade for each online exercise will be awarded and posted in BbL. Some exercises will be administered during class time and a grade will be awarded and posted in BbL.

Discussion Boards
Please read the Discussion Board Guidelines for guidance before beginning each discussion board assignment. Student posts are required to be submitted by the deadline noted. Discussion board assignments are not timed and may be reviewed once the post is submitted, but not edited by the student. A grade for each discussion board will be awarded and posted in BbL.

Grading Procedure

Total Points Possible for Semester = 390

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>351-390</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312-350</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>273-311</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>234-310</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-234</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accessing Grades
Grades will be accessible to students after assigned course work is completed by all students and graded.
FAMILY MEDIATION 4010.001/.070 – FALL 2015 - COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 – August 23-August 29, 2015
Class meeting on August 26th

Discussion of course requirements, expectations, course content in BbL.

Making the Case: Restructuring Family Relationships Through Mediation
- Read: Renegotiating Family Relationships text – Ch. 1
- Read: Divorce and Family Mediation excerpt – Ch. 1
- Introduce Yourself In Class

Week 2 – August 30-September 5, 2015
Class meeting on September 2nd

There will be a syllabus quiz worth a maximum of 10 points administered in class.

Emotions in Divorce
- Read: Renegotiating Family Relationships text – Chs. 2-3
- Read: What Is Emotional Intelligence?
- Complete: exercise – Does Your Emotional IQ Matter?
- Complete: discussion board – Managing Clients’ Emotions: The Case of Sheila and John

Week 3 – September 6-12, 2015
Class meeting on September 9th

Renegotiating Relationships
- Read: Renegotiating Family Relationships text – Ch. 4
- Complete: Small group exercise and role play – The Case of Sheila and John: Separating Marital and Parental Roles

Week 4 – September 13-19, 2015
Class meeting on September 16th

Renegotiating Relationships
- Read: Renegotiating Family Relationships text – Ch. 5
- Complete: Small group exercise – The Case of Sheila and John: Two-Parent Divorced Families
Week 5 – September 20-26, 2015
Class meeting on September 23rd

Divorce and Custody Law
• Read: Renegotiating Family Relationships text – Ch. 6
• Read: Texas Family Code – Title 1 pp. 4-61; Title 2 pp. 72-72; p. 87-88; Title 4 pp. 215-236; Title 5 – pp. 236-633; Title 6 pp. 634-635

Week 6 – September 27-October 3, 2015
Class meeting on September 30th

Divorce and Custody Law and How They Intersect With Family Violence
• Read: Renegotiating Family Relationships text – Ch. 6
• Read: Texas Family Code – Title 1 pp. 4-61; Title 2 pp. 72-72; p. 87-88; Title 4 pp. 215-236; Title 5 – pp. 236-633; Title 6 pp. 634-635
• Complete: discussion board

Week 7 – October 4-10, 2015
Class meeting on October 7th

How the Law Really Works In the Best Interest of the Child
• Panel discussion: professionals in the field
• Read: Texas Family Code – Title 1 pp. 4-61; Title 2 pp. 72-72; p. 87-88; Title 4 pp. 215-236; Title 5 – pp. 236-633; Title 6 pp. 634-635

Week 8 – October 11-17, 2015
Class meeting on October 14th

The Reality of Family Case Litigation
• Observe: family case in court for at least 2 hours
• Complete: 3-page paper
• Role play simulation - TBA

Week 9 – October 18-24, 2015
Class meeting on October 21st

Setting the Stage and the First Session
• Read: Renegotiating Family Relationships text – Ch. 7
• Class discussion and role play- Small group exercise and role play – The Case of Sheila and John
Week 10 – October 25-October 31, 2015
Class meeting on October 28th

Setting the Stage and the First Session
- Read: Renegotiating Family Relationships text – Ch. 7
- Complete: discussion board – The Case of Sheila and John

Week 11 – November 1-7, 2015
Class meeting on November 4th

Negotiating to Secure Agreement
- Read: Renegotiating Family Relationships text – Ch. 8
- Class discussion and role play – The Case of Sheila and John

Week 12 – November 8-14, 2015
Class meeting on November 11th

Negotiating to Secure Agreement
- Read: Renegotiating Family Relationships text – Ch. 8
- Complete: discussion board – The Case of Sheila and John

Week 13 – November 15-21, 2015
Class meeting on November 18th

Special Applications and Considerations: The Road Less Traveled
- Read: Divorce and Family Mediation handouts – Chs. 13-17
- Complete: Small group exercise and role play

Week 14 – November 22-November 28, 2015 [THANKSGIVING]
No class meeting on November 25th – check Blackboard for additional exercises

Special Applications and Considerations: The Road Less Traveled
- Read: Divorce and Family Mediation excerpts – Chs. 13-17
- Complete: discussion board

Week 15 – November 29-December 5, 2015
Class meeting on December 2nd

Research Outcomes
- Read: Renegotiating Family Relationships text – Ch. 9
• Class discussion of research outcomes
• Class discussion of final assignment

Week 16 – December 6-12, 2015
No class meeting on December 9th

How the Law Really Works In the Best Interest of the Child
• Complete: final – The Case of Sheila and John

Course Evaluation
Toward the end of the semester, students will be able to complete a course survey at www.my.unt.edu. Please logon and select SETE.

Scholarly Expectations
All works submitted for credit must be original works created by the scholar uniquely for the class. It is considered inappropriate and unethical, particularly at the graduate level, to make duplicate submissions of a single work for credit in multiple classes, unless specifically requested by the instructor.

Resources
UNT Portal: http://my.unt.edu
UNT Blackboard Learn Student Resources: Technical Support: http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/
UNT Library Information for Off-Campus Users: http://www.library.unt.edu/services/for-special-audiences/offcampus/information-for-off-campus-users
UNT Computing and Information Technology Center: http://cict.unt.edu/services-solutions/students
Computer Labs: General access computer lab information (including locations and hours of operation) can be located at: http://www.gacl.unt.edu/

Course Policies
Exercises/ Assignments / Discussion Board Policy
Due dates for all course work are posted in the instructions connected to each assignment. Your online work should be submitted in the submission section and submitted by using the “Submit” button at the end of each assignment. Students should complete work in a Word document, save it for their records and then copy, cut and paste it in the page available in BbL.

Late Work
The professor will base decisions regarding acceptance of and credit for late work consistent with UNT and course policies. An extension may be given under limited circumstances,
including but not limited to, the student's or a close family member's illness or injury; death of a close family member; or other major life event. If a student believes he/she will miss or has missed assigned course work, the student must contact the professor within two (2) days after the course work's due date has passed. The student must provide written documentation of any such event upon request. If a student fails to timely contact the professor and/or provide the requested documentation, the student will not be given additional time to complete the assigned course work and will receive no credit for the assigned course work.

Copyright Notice
Some or all of the materials on this course Web site may be protected by copyright. Federal copyright law prohibits the reproduction, distribution, public performance, or public display of copyrighted materials without the express and written permission of the copyright owner, unless fair use or another exemption under copyright law applies. Additional copyright information may be located at: http://copyright.unt.edu/content/unt-copyright-policies.

Undergraduate Online Course Attendance Policy
Students who attend classes regularly typically experience greater success than those students who do not attend regularly. Similarly, students who enroll in online courses also typically perform better by fully participating in the course.

Information about the University of North Texas’ Attendance Policy may be found at: http://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-2-5.

Syllabus Change Policy
Changes to the syllabus may be necessary at times. Communication of any changes will be made via an announcement or message tabs in Blackboard.

Policy on Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties
The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and also contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

UNT and Department Policies
Student Conduct: Any student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct class or other students’ opportunity to learn is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any instructional setting at UNT. This includes traditional face-to-face classes, online or blended classes, labs, discussion groups or boards, field trips, and verbal and/or written (including email) communication with the instructor and/or
other students. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, disrespectful treatment of other students (verbal or written), disrupting lecture, and use of inappropriate or profane language or gestures in class or other instructional settings.

A student engaging in unacceptable behavior may be directed to leave the classroom or other instructional setting and may also be referred to the Dean of Students to consider whether his/her conduct violates UNT’s Student Code of Conduct.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity emanates from a culture that embraces the core values of trust and honesty necessary for full learning to occur. As a student-centered public research university, UNT promotes the integrity of the learning process by establishing and enforcing academic standards. Academic dishonesty breaches the mutual trust necessary in an academic environment and undermines all scholarship. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, forging the signature of the instructor or of another student, fabrication, and/or facilitating or sabotaging the academic dishonesty of other students.

Any suspected occurrence of academic dishonesty will be investigated and handled in accordance with UNT policy and procedures. The following academic penalties may be assessed at the instructor’s discretion upon determination that academic dishonesty has occurred. *Admonitions and educational assignments are not appealable.*

1. **Admonition.** The student may be issued a verbal or written warning.
2. **Assignment of Educational Coursework.** The student may be required to perform additional coursework not required of other students in the specific course.
3. **Partial or no credit for an assignment or assessment.** The instructor may award partial or no credit for the assignment or assessment on which the student engaged in academic dishonesty, to be calculated into the final course grade.
4. **Course Failure.** The instructor may assign a failing grade for the course.

Should the procedure for appeal of a case of academic dishonesty extend beyond the date when the instructor submits course grades for the semester, the student will be assigned a grade that reflects the penalty, which shall be adjusted, as appropriate, at the conclusion of any appeal process.

Specific details and description of UNT’s Policy on Student Standards of Academic Integrity (18.1.16) and students’ right to appeal are available at [http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf](http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf).

**Disability Accommodation:** In accordance with university policies and state and federal regulations, UNT is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. To this end, all academic units are willing to make reasonable and appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies in order to facilitate equality of educational access for persons with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide the student with an accommodation letter to be hand delivered to the instructor to begin a private discussion regarding the student’s specific needs in the course.

Students may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Every semester,
students must obtain a new letter of accommodation, and they must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class.

Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to request that students discuss such letters during their designated office hours in order to protect the privacy of the student.

For additional information, visit the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) in Sage Hall, suite 167, or their website at http://disability.unt.edu. You may also contact the ODA office by phone at 940.565.4323. Specific information on UNT’s policies related to disability accommodations is available at http://policy.unt.edu/policy/18-1-14.

Please note that disability accommodations are not retroactively applied to the start of a course. Accommodations in the course become effective after the student has delivered an official accommodation letter from UNT’s ODA.

Professional Etiquette
The college experience is intended to assist in preparing students for professional and career pursuits. That preparation includes learning to use professional etiquette in dealing with people in positions of authority. The appropriate way to address your instructor depends on her/his particular education credentials. These are usually indicated on the course syllabus. If your instructor has a:

- Doctorate (Ph.D. or Ed.D.), you should address them as: Dr. Instructor’s last name
- Master’s degree (MA, MS, MSW, MSSW) you should address them as: Professor Instructor’s last name
- Law degree (J.D.) you should address them as: Professor Instructor’s last name

If you are not certain about an instructor’s education credentials, you should address them as “Professor.” It is not appropriate to call the instructor by his/her first name unless given permission.

Professional etiquette extends to all types of communication with your instructor. Written communication—including email—forms a permanent record and so it is important to use care about how you make requests, ask questions, or express concerns. Slang (e.g., Hey, Yo) and texting abbreviations should be avoided. The use of profanity is not permitted.

Any type of communication—verbal or written—is most likely to achieve the intended result when it is polite or courteous. Please note that communication can be polite even if there is some type of conflict involved. Instructors may choose not to respond to emails or other forms of communication that are perceived as insulting or disrespectful.
Requests for an Incomplete: Students may request a grade of incomplete ("I") only if he/she meets all of the following conditions:

- The request occurs on or after November 9, 2015;
- The student is passing the course;
- There is a justifiable and documented reason beyond the control of the student (e.g., serious illness or military service) for not completing the course on schedule; and,
- The student has the approval of the instructor and the department chair.

Students meeting these criteria must arrange with the instructor to finish the course at a later date by completing specific requirements outlined by the instructor. These requirements must be listed on a “Request for Grade of Incomplete” form signed by the instructor, student, and department chair. More information on UNT’s Incomplete Grade policy is available at http://registrar.unt.edu/grades/incompletes.

Requests to drop the class: We want you to succeed in this class and at UNT. If you are concerned about your progress in the course, or believe you need to drop for other reasons, it is important that you contact the instructor as soon as possible. We want to make sure that dropping the course is your best or only option.

There are consequences to dropping classes that extend beyond losing your invested time, money, and effort. Dropping one or more classes may make you ineligible for financial aid. There are also limits on the number of courses you can drop. You can learn more about this at http://registrar.unt.edu/registration/dropping-class.

If you absolutely have to drop the course, you must pick up a drop form from the Eagle Student Services Center and take it to the instructor for her/his signature. Once the instructor signs the form, you are responsible for taking it to the Registrar’s Office in the Eagle Student Services Center to have it processed. Please be aware that when you choose to drop can affect your grade:

October 2, 2015 Last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” for courses that a student is not passing

November 2, 2015 Last day a student may elect to drop a class. The instructor will assign a grade of “W” or “WF” based on the student’s actual performance-to-date in the course.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses:
Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website at http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov. The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at "Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f) (6) (i) (G)" and can be found buried within this document: http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getcfr.cgi?TITLE=8&PART=214&SECTION=2&TYPE=TEXT

The paragraph reads:
(G) For F–1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F–1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance
To comply with immigration regulations, an F–1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course. If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student’s responsibility to do the following:
(1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.
(2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F–1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Emergency Notification and Procedures
UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all currently enrolled students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at https://my.unt.edu/. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas in the buildings where your classes are held, 2) determine how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and 3) identify where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.