**PACS 4000.070 – MEDIATION (3 credit hours)**

Collin Higher Education Campus (CHEC) – McKinney

Spring 2012

January 17 – April 10, 2012

Tuesdays 6:00-9:50pm

Room 222

**Campus Information**

Please see [www.collin.edu/chec](http://www.collin.edu/chec) for information on location and directions.

**Professor / Instructor Contact Information**- Leslie R. Roberts, Senior Lecturer  
- Chilton Hall, room 263  
- UNT Office Phone (940) 565-3437 Fax (940) 565-4663

- UNT Denton office hours – Monday 1-6pm; Thursday 9am-2pm; by appointment

- UNT CHEC Campus office hours – Tuesday 1-6pm; by appointment

- Email address – When communicating by email, please communicate with the instructor via Blackboard email **only**.

**About the Professor / Instructor**Ms. Roberts is an attorney and mediator whose legal practice has encompassed international matters, regulatory and political matters, general business and transactional matters, and special education; mediation practice includes business, employment and family disputes.

**Materials – Text, Readings, Supplementary Readings**- Required text

*The Mediator’s Handbook*, Jennifer E. Beer with Eileen Stief, New Society Publishers, 1994

- Required readings – in accordance with the course schedule in this syllabus.  
- Supplementary readings – as assigned from time-to-time.

**Course Description**  
Mediation is a communication tool for resolving differences. Frequently, mediation is explained as a process that assists conflicting parties to arrive at a resolution that they find mutually acceptable. A higher goal of mediation is to help parties experience the transformative potential of mediation so that they may learn how to solve their own problems in the future. From either perspective, mediation also can be viewed as a process—i.e., mediation is a series of well-defined steps through which the mediator guides parties who are in conflict.

Mediation has a long and honorable history within society-at-large. References to the use of third-party neutrals go back to Biblical times. Likewise, mediation has been pursued in the United States since our very beginning.

As specified in Texas law, “mediation is a forum in which an impartial person, the mediator, facilitates communications between the parties to promote reconciliation, settlement, or understanding among them. . . . A mediator may not impose his own judgment on the issues for that of the parties.” (Acts 1987, 70th Le., ch. 1121, sec. 1, eff. June 20, 1987.)

The mediation course defines, examines, and demonstrates the process of mediation. It covers the history and development of mediation and introduces important concepts and theories of conflict management. Also included is a review of the diverse settings in which mediation may be successful. Significant legal, ethical, and diversity issues are reviewed.

Students are introduced to the concepts and practice of mediation through lectures, discussions, presentations, case studies, and significant opportunities for role-playing exercises. Those who successfully complete this course will develop a deep understanding of how mediators think, what works in mediation, and the benefits and limitations of using various mediation techniques in alternative settings. Students who seriously pursue the in-class exercises will gain valuable experience and insight into mediation methods and techniques. Thus, class attendance, including participation in class exercises, is critical to the learning objectives.

Upon successful completion of the course, students will have gained sufficient knowledge and role-playing experience to co-mediate a two-party, small claims dispute. Those who do well in class and continue learning will soon be able to work constructively in mediating more complex conflicts. All students of mediation find that they must improve their listening, thinking, reading, and writing skills continuously to serve the needs of conflicting parties.

**Instructional methods**

Class instruction consists of lecture with a significant amount of interaction by each student, as well as completion and discussion of seven mandatory exercises. The instructor expects each student to participate in order to integrate the subject matter as a new or improved skill. Online instruction consists of preparation for the mandatory exercises, review of videos and written materials, as well as online quizzes and a written exam.

**Course Requirements**

Reading: Most reading assignments will be from the text authored by Jennifer E. Beer with Eileen Stief, *The Mediator’s Handbook*. A considerable amount of handout materials will be distributed throughout the semester. Students will be accountable for reading all materials assigned or distributed in class and must be prepared to discuss and analyze it.

Learning objective: Mediators are expected to be “quick readers” of written materials that parties often bring into mediation sessions.

Participation: Significant amounts of class time will be spent in group discussions on theoretical and practice issues in mediation. Class discussions will be led by the teacher and students will be asked questions and must participate meaningfully. Each student is expected to make meaningful and substantial contributions to class discussions and exercises. In particular, you are expected to demonstrate the critical thinking, reasoning, and questioning skills that you will employ in actual mediation sessions. Upon completion or near completion of the assigned readings and activities, you are expected to engage in an ongoing discussion/debate with your learning community peers.

Learning objective: Mediators must be able to listen actively to what others say and to communicate clearly their own, reasoned responses.

Mandatory exercises: Participation in seven designated exercises is mandatory. Students must complete and submit the online assignment associated with each exercise and participate in each exercise in the classroom. The online assignment submitted will be graded. Failure to complete assignments or participate in class will result in appropriate reductions in final grades. Departing class early or arriving excessively late will count against the class participation portion of your grade and may also prohibit your receiving credit for participating in mandatory exercises. Students who are absent when a class exercise is administered should not expect to make it up at a later date.

Learning objective: Through dedicated, full engagement in mediation practice, mediators learn to replace their old, unsuccessful ways of resolving conflict with new skills.

Quizzes: Each student will individually complete online quizzes involving a set of facts provided to you.

Learning objective: Mediators must apply the skills required of a mediator.

Group Presentation: The class will be divided into groups for presentations to the class on an assigned topic. Groups must work together as a team to produce a meaningful presentation. Groups may work in-person, online or via other communication tools that are available to all team members.

Learning objective: Mediators must develop the discipline to prepare prior to each mediation and be skilled at orally communicating complex ideas.

Final Examination: The final examination will be designed to test students’ knowledge and understanding of mediation principles and concepts, including the legal and ethical issues of mediation. The final exam is comprehensive, covering the entire class.

Learning objective: Mediators must be able to reason and remain focused under pressure.

**Teaching Philosophy**I am eager to engage students who are enrolled in a 4000-level course because they are expected to be independent learners and thinkers who are eager to improve and further develop their conflict resolution skills. Students should expect to receive demonstrations, guidance and direction, and an opportunity to practice their new skills in a productive learning environment.

**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:

PC: Windows 98 (2nd Edition), 2000, XP, Vista, Windows 7  
Mac: OS 9, OSX  
Internet Access with [compatible web browser](http://www.webct.com/tuneup/viewpage?name=tuneup_browsers_vista80_ce80) (Select link for Vista 8.0 SP4)   
Java: Version 1.6.0 Update 24 (JRE 1.6.0\_24): Click [HERE](https://ecampussupport.unt.edu/index.cfm?M=Faculty_Resources&PF=../Support/browser_plugins) and choose “Download Java”  
Word Processor *[Other related hardware or software necessary for the course]*

*-*Browser and computer settings check: <https://ecampussupport.unt.edu/browser>-Computer and Internet Literacy: Visit <http://www.clt.odu.edu/oso/index.php?src=pe_comp_lit>  
-Plug-ins necessary to access course materials and resources: <https://ecampussupport.unt.edu/plugin>   
**ACCESS & NAVIGATION**

**Access and Log in Information**This course was developed and will be facilitated utilizing the University of North Texas’ Learning Management System known as Blackboard. To get started with the course, please go to: <http://ecampus.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>.

**Ticket to Vista Tutorial**As a student, you will have access to the “Ticket to Vista” tutorial via Blackboard Vista. It is recommended that you become familiar with the tools and tutorials within Ticket to Vista to better equip you to navigate the course.

**Being a Successful Online Student**-[What Makes a Successful Online Student?](http://www.ion.uillinois.edu/resources/tutorials/pedagogy/StudentProfile.asp)  
-[Self Evaluation for Potential Online Students](http://www.ion.uillinois.edu/resources/tutorials/pedagogy/selfEval.asp)

**What Should Students Do First?**Students should submit the following information via Blackboard email the first week of class:

Name

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 emails 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: [vista@unt.edu](mailto:vista@unt.edu)  
Phone: 940-565-2324  
In Person: ISB Rm. 119

Regular hours are maintained to provide support to students. Please refer to the website (<https://ecampussupport.unt.edu/index.cfm?M=Student_Resources> ) for updated hours.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

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

-Email

For all course-related questions, please read this syllabus carefully before seeking assistance. You must use the Mail feature in Blackboard for all electronic communications with your professor.

Students can expect a response from the instructor within 24-hours of sending a message. If your concern is urgent, please call and speak by phone or leave a message.

Please extend the receiver of your message the same courtesy you would expect when communicating. Please read and consider the content of the message before responding. Profanity and insults will not be tolerated.

- Announcements

Please check the Announcements frequently for updated information and changes.

**ASSESSMENT & GRADING**

**Assessments**This course will utilize the following instruments to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes for the course.

**Grading Procedure**

Grades will be determined by the following weights:

Class participation/completion of mandatory exercises in class – 15 %

Mandatory exercises (submitting online assignments) – 20 %

Quizzes – 20 %

Group presentation – 20 %

Final Exam – 25 %

Final grades are determined as follows:

90 – 100% = A

80 – 89% = B

70 – 79% = C

60 - 69% = D

0 – 59% = F

If a student believes he/she will miss class over an extended period of time and may be unable to complete all assignments timely, the student must contact the instructor immediately to discuss options. Because completion of all mandatory exercises is required, repeated absences can result in a failing grade for the course.

**Accessing Grades**

Grades will be accessible to students after assignments/quizzes/exams are completed by all students and graded.

**Online Assignment Submission Instructions**Assignments may be accessed by clicking on the Assignments link on the course menu and are required to be submitted online by the deadline noted. A grade for each assignment will be awarded and posted in Blackboard. Late submissions will **not** be accepted.

**Online Tests/Quizzes**Students may access quizzes/exams by clicking the Assessments link on the course menu. Each quiz is timed. Please read the on-screen instructions carefully before you click “Begin Assessment”. Please save each answer before moving to the next question. After each quiz is graded and released, you may go back to the Assessments page to review your results.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Date Assignment

**Tuesday, January 17** Discuss course expectations and syllabus

Discuss Overview, pp. 3-26, *The Mediator’s Handbook*

In-class completion of mandatory exercise 1 – Role Reversal

Online videos: How Mediation Started, How It’s Different; Dissatisfaction w/ Litigation; Central Ideas of Mediation; Helping People Change Their Perspectives

Complete online quiz #1 outside class between January 17-24

**Tuesday, January 24** Review last class’ topics

Discuss quiz #1

Discuss ethics of mediation – TX ADR statute, Texas Bar

Association Ethical Guidelines (see handouts on course homepage)

Online videos: Ethical Practices w/in Mediation; Being Neutral Is a Myth; Importance of Neutrality/Non-Partisanship; Impartiality v. Neutrality

Complete mandatory exercise 2 assignment outside class between January 24-31

**Tuesday, January 31**  Review last class’ topics

Discuss The Mediation Session, pp. 27-67, *The Mediator’s Handbook*

In-class completion of mandatory exercise 2

View online videos: [Full length videos] Live Mediation Teaching Video (90 mins.)

Complete opening statement online assignment outside class between January 31-February 7 (serves as quiz #2); (see handout on course homepage)

**Tuesday, February 7** Review last class’ topics

Discuss opening statement assignment

View/discuss video

Complete mandatory exercise 3 assignment outside class between February 7-14

View online videos: Art & Science of Mediation; Mediation as Performance Art; Connecting w/ Parties Involved; The Perfect Mediator

**Tuesday, February 14** Review last class’ topics

In-class completion of mandatory exercise 3

Discuss Supporting the People, pp. 67-88, *The Mediator’s Handbook*

View online videos: Patience is a Critical Skill; Styles & Approach; Deeper Understanding; Presence During Mediation

Complete online quiz #3 outside class between February 14-21

**Tuesday, February 21** Review last class’ topics

Discuss quiz #3

Discuss Controlling the Process, pp. 89-104, *The Mediator’s Handbook*

Complete mandatory exercise 4 assignment outside class between February 21-28

View online videos: Process of an Effective Mediator

**Tuesday, February 28** Review last class’ topics

In-class completion of mandatory exercise 4

Discuss Solving the Problem, pp. 105-132, *The Mediator’s Handbook*

View/discuss video

View online videos: Practicing Empathy w/ Parties; Approach: Mostly Facilitative; Directive vs. Facilitative; Evaluative Approach; Concerns w/ Evaluative Mediation

Complete online quiz #4 outside class between February 28-March 6

**Tuesday, March 6**  Review last class’ topics

Discuss quiz #4

View/discuss video

Discuss/make group presentation assignment

Group breakouts

Complete mandatory exercise 5 assignment outside class between March 6-13

**Tuesday, March 13** Review last class’ topics

In-class completion of mandatory exercise 5

Group breakouts

View online videos: Should Mediators Intervene?; Psychology of Mediating; From Conflict to Reconciliation

Complete online quiz #5 outside class between March 13-20

**Tuesday, March 20 SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS MEETING**

**Tuesday, March 27** Discuss quiz #5

Group presentations

Complete mandatory exercise assignment 6 outside class between March 27-April 3

View online video: [Full length videos] Mediators At Work (88 mins.)

**Tuesday, April 3**  In-class completion of mandatory exercise 6

Discuss mandatory exercise 7 to prepare for final exam

Complete mandatory exercise 7 assignment outside class between April 3-10

Review for final exam outside class

**Tuesday, April 10**  Complete/submit online final exam using mandatory exercise 7

**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 Student Resources: Technical Support: <https://ecampussupport.unt.edu/index.cfm?M=Student_Resources>

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://citc.unt.edu/services-solutions/students>

Computer Labs: *[provide information if departmental labs are available for use to students*]. General access computer lab information (including locations and hours of operation) can be located at: <http://www.gacl.unt.edu/>

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Assignment Policy**Due dates for each assignment are posted in the instructions connected to each assignment. Assignments should be submitted in Word format and submitted by using the “Submit” button at the end of each assignment.

**Examination Policy**

Quizzes and exams are open-book and open-note; however, you may not discuss a quiz or exam with another student unless both have completed and submitted their answers. Missed quizzes or exams may not be taken at a later date without written documentation that justifies the error. Students will have the opportunity to access a quiz or exam a second time if they lose their internet connection or have another technological problem that prevents completion of the quiz or exam. Students who experience either must contact the student help desk to report the problem and send the instructor an email in Blackboard. Only then may the student make a second attempt.

**Late Work**Late work will not be accepted without written documentation that justifies the delayed submission. Acceptance of and credit for is determined consistent with UNT policies and at the instructor’s discretion where permitted.

**Class Participation**Students are required to login regularly to the online class site. The instructor will use the tracking feature in Blackboard to monitor student activity. Students are also required to participate in all class activities such as discussion board, chat or conference sessions and group projects.

**Virtual Classroom Citizenship**The same guidelines that apply to traditional classes should be observed in the virtual classroom environment. Please use proper netiquette when interacting with class members and the professor.

**Incompletes**If a student wishes to request a grade of “incomplete,” the student must:

• Submit the request in writing as soon as possible during the semester.

• Submit the request to the instructor at the instructor’s address above.

• Discuss the request with the instructor before or after class.

No requests will be considered later than one week prior to the final exam, UNLESS A SERIOUS INTERRUPTIVE EVENT OCCURS WITHIN THAT TIME PERIOD. It is within the instructor’s sole discretion to grant such a request. Please see the “Grading System” section of the current UNT Undergraduate or Graduate Catalog for details. STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE AN “INCOMPLETE” MUST COMPLETE THE COURSE NOT LATER THAN ONE CALENDAR YEAR THEREAFTER TO AVOID AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVING A FAILING GRADE.

**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.

**Undergraduate Online Course Attendance Policy**Students who attend classes regularly typically experience greater success than those students who do not attend regularly. Students must be present and fully engaged in each mandatory exercise to receive credit.

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

**Administrative Withdrawal**Students may add this course or withdraw in accordance with the University’s policy currently in effect.

**Syllabus Change Policy**Changes to the syllabus may be necessary at times. Communication of any changes will be made via the Announcement tab and Email 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: vista@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 POLICIES**

**Student Conduct and Discipline**   
***Please refer to the UNT Faculty Handbook or your department regarding the Student Code of Conduct Policy.***

**Academic Honesty Policy**Academic dishonesty is defined in the UNT Policy on Student Standards for Academic Integrity. Any suspected case of Academic Dishonestly will be handled in accordance with University policy and procedures. Possible academic penalties range from a verbal or written admonition to a grade of “F” in the course. Further sanctions may apply to incidents involving major violations. You will find the policy and procedures at http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm.

**ADA Policy**If you have a condition that requires accommodation in this course, please notify the instructor during the first week of class. Any necessary or appropriate accommodations will be made provided that timely notice is received, and that the arrangement is consistent with recommendations from Disability Services, when applicable. Students who require this type of assistance should contact the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) at (940) 565-4323, or at TTY (940) 369-8652 to make appropriate arrangements. Information on the services provided by the ODA as well as application procedures is available at http://www.unt.edu/oda/index.html. 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 retroactive. Accommodations will be made only after a disability is officially verified.

**Student Behavior in the Classroom**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [www.unt.edu/csrr](http://www.unt.edu/csrr).

**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/get-cfr.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](mailto:internationaladvising@unt.edu)) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.