



SMU | SIMMONS
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION &
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

*DISPUTE RESOLUTION
GRADUATE CERTIFICATE
AND
MASTER OF ARTS
PROGRAMS*

*Student
Handbook*

This handbook is designed as a reference for general program information, answers to frequently asked questions and guidelines to SMU academic policies and procedures.

Students are responsible for knowing the contents of this handbook.

Welcome to the Dispute Resolution Program at Southern Methodist University

This handbook contains important information for your reference as you begin your career in the Dispute Resolution Program. You may contact the Dispute Resolution office for additional information or assistance at 214-768-4500 or by emailing disputeresolution@smu.edu.

INFORMATION INCLUDED:

- 1. Student ID**
- 2. Password and Computer Help**
- 3. SMU Email Account**
- 4. My.SMU**
- 5. Financial Information:**
 - a. Financial Aid**
 - b. Payment Due Date and Late Fees**
 - c. SMUPay and Payment Options**
- 6. Academic Requirements and Procedural Information:**
 - a. Course Requirements**
 - b. Transfer Credits**
 - c. Academic Advising**
 - d. Practicum and Internships**
 - e. Class Availability**
 - f. Course Attendance**
 - g. Drops and Withdrawals**
 - h. Grade of 'Incomplete'**
 - i. Academic Probation**
 - j. Grade Dispute**
 - k. Student Competence**
 - l. Social Media Guidelines**
 - m. Graduation**
- 7. Important Websites and Phone Numbers**
- 8. Statement on Confidentiality and Emotional Safety**

1.) Student ID

All Dispute Resolution students are assigned an eight-digit SMU identification number, which is used to verify each student's identity and is provided without additional charges. The student should furnish the SMU ID number on all forms when requested, as this number is the primary means the University has to verify the identity for each student's academic records and transactions related to the records. You will need your SMU ID number along with a password in order to register and pay for classes, obtain grades, access online student services and apply for graduation.

Although most graduate students do not need a Student ID card, it can be useful to obtain discounts or to participate in the many SMU extracurricular events. Enrolled students may obtain an **SMU Photo ID** free of charge at the Pony Express Window located at the Hughes Trigg Student Center, 3140 Dyer St, hours are 8:30 – 4:45 pm, Monday – Friday. For additional information, call the Pony Express Office at 214-768-7275. The Photo ID also serves as a library card and the bar code at the bottom is your student library number. **You must be currently enrolled in coursework to be eligible to obtain an ID card.** Library privileges are suspended during terms in which you do not take classes.

2.) Password and Computer Help

Within approximately two weeks of joining the program, you will receive information on how to set up a password to use with your SMU email account and My.SMU. The Dispute Resolution office is not given your password, so if you lose it or forget it you will need to contact the Help Desk at 214-768-HELP (4357) or their website is <http://www.smu.edu/OIT/Services/PasswordReset>. There is a Password Reset Tool located on their website. You will want to enroll in the "Password Reset Tool" so that you can change your own password. **Passwords expire every six months, notices are sent to your SMU email address only.**

3.) SMU Email Account

All students at SMU are provided with an SMU email account. This account serves as the University's official form of communication. Dispute Resolution students should check their SMU email often, as class information, financial aid, and important announcements from the University are sent exclusively to this email. It is the responsibility of students to keep all their addresses current and to regularly check communications sent to them since they are responsible for complying with requests, deadlines and other requirements sent to any of their mailing addresses on file or to their SMU email.

To log into your email account, visit www.smu.edu/webmail. You will be required to enter your ID number and your password to log in.

4.) My.SMU

My.SMU is the University's student information maintenance system. Log on at <http://my.smu.edu> and you can:

- Register for classes
- Clear holds
- Pay for Dispute Resolution classes
- View grades
- Check registered classes for the term
- Obtain an unofficial transcript
- Maintain address and phone information

- Check financial aid status in the *Pony Tracks* section
- Apply for Graduation
- View Textbooks and Syllabi for classes in your schedule

5.) Financial Information

All courses are payable during the formal registration period, the **payment due date for each term can be found at <http://www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/Bursar/DueDates>**. Acceptable forms of payment and directions for how to pay can be found at <http://www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/Bursar/Payments/MakePaymentSMUpay>.

a) *Financial Aid Loans*

Available through www.fafsa.ed.gov. Give your application several weeks to be processed by the SMU Financial Aid office, your contact will be Charmissa Edmun-Ajakaiye, 214-768-3348. **You must take two classes in every term in order to maintain eligibility.** Summer Term is optional, but if you take classes, you still must take two to remain in compliance.

b) *Payment Due Date and Late Fees*

Course payment is due in full by the payment due date for the term noted on the SMU Bursar webpage (noted above). It is the student's responsibility to meet payment deadlines. All accounts with an outstanding balance after registration closes will be assessed a **\$150.00 late payment** fee by the Finance Office.

For **regular classes (weeknights)** - not seminars (weekends and weeklong formats) - students may drop or withdraw from classes up to the day before the term begins for a 100% refund.

All students taking **seminars** have the option to add or drop without financial penalty up to **two weeks prior** to the **start date** of the seminar (14 full days, weekends included). There are **NO REFUNDS** for drops or withdrawals within two weeks of the seminar start date.

c) *SMUPay and Payment Options*

SMU currently accepts personal checks, American Express, Discover and MasterCard for tuition payments. Please be advised that **Credit Card payments are assessed a 2.75% surcharge by the vendor and this amount is not refundable.** eCheck is the preferred venue since no extra charge is assessed. If you wish to write a check from a credit union, money market, or business account, those must be handled through Student Financials office in the Blanton building on main campus as SMUPay will not accept them. Detailed instructions for SMUPay can be found at <http://www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/Bursar/Payments/MakePaymentSMUpay>.

6.) Academic Requirements and Procedural Information

a. *Course Requirements*

To complete the Graduate Certificate, you must complete a total of 21 credit hours, comprised of seven, 3-credit-hour classes **within three years of your program start date**. The required core classes are *Psychology of Conflict, Mediation and Dispute Resolution*, and *Negotiation and Dispute Resolution*. In addition, you may select four other classes within the program to complete the requirements.

To complete the Master of Arts in Dispute Resolution, you must complete a total of 42 credit hours, comprised of fourteen 3-credit-hour classes **within six years of your program start date**. The required classes are *Psychology of Conflict, Mediation and Dispute Resolution, Negotiation and Dispute Resolution, Research Methods, Practicum or Corporate Internship or Independent Study* and *Foundations of the American Legal System or Communication and Dispute Resolution*. The remaining 24 credits can be chosen from a wide variety of electives.

b. Transfer Credits

No transfer credits are accepted for the Graduate Certificate program, but up to 6 graduate credits may be petitioned for transfer into the Master’s program. These credits must minimally meet the following criteria:

- The course is compatible or has parallel with the Dispute Resolution curriculum
- The course is graduate level (6000 or above)
- The student earned a grade of A or B
- The course has not been used in attaining a previous degree
- The course has been taken within the past six years

c. Course Loads

The maximum course-load for any student and any term is three classes (9-credit-hours). This is also considered to be graduate full-time status.

d. Academic Advising

Feel free to choose your academic advisor from the following list:

| Faculty | Specialty | Contact Information |
|--------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Dr. Betty Snyder | Communications, mediation, interpersonal conflict | bgilmore@smu.edu |
| Dr. Robert Barner | International, organizational development | bbarner@smu.edu |
| Dr. John Potter | Research, mediation and general conflict studies | jwpotter@smu.edu |
| Prof. Tom Hartsell, J.D. | Ethics, legal, mediation | thartsel@smu.edu |
| Prof. Angela Mitakidis | Mediation, family conflict | amitakidis@smu.edu |

e. Practicum, Internships, Independent Study

Practicum is optional for Certificate students, and mandatory for Master’s students unless they apply and are accepted to a Corporate Internship or Independent Study. Internships are open only to Master’s students. The Practicum consists of observation and practical experience at our onsite Center for Mediations. To be eligible to participate, you must have taken Psychology of Conflict, Mediation, Negotiation, and Research Methods. Students interested in the Corporate Internships must have completed 18 credits of coursework to be considered.

f. Class Availability

Class size is set by the course instructor and DR staff. Small classes are an integral part of the program’s education philosophy. Classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Waiting

lists will be maintained by the DR office and students called as seats open up. **Students should not contact a professor directly to ask permission to be added to a course that is full.**

g. Course Attendance

Faculty and Adjuncts utilize their own grading criteria concerning absences and tardiness but all courses are subject to the following attendance policies:

- Students should give instructors 24 hours' notice of any absence whenever possible. This notice should be sent directly to the instructor using the contact information in the course syllabus.
- If a student must miss one class, it is the student's responsibility to obtain all material and assignments covered during their absence.
- **A student's final grade will be impacted if two absences occur, or more than 5 total hours missed of a weekend seminar course.**
- A student missing more than the above may, at the instructor's discretion:
 - receive a grade of incomplete if the requirements to do so have been met
 - receive a failing grade for the course
 - drop or withdraw from the course understanding that this option may have serious financial consequences and impact any financial aid awards. Students should refer to the Add/Drop Policy and Withdrawal Policy found on the Academic Calendar.

h. Drops and Withdrawals

Please be aware that there are differences between a class drop and a withdrawal. They have separate financial policies. The deadlines for drops and withdrawals are posted on the Academic Calendar which you should have received with this bulletin as well as posted on the Dispute Resolution website. Withdrawals must be handled by the Dispute Resolution office; students who wish to withdraw from all their courses must notify the Dispute Resolution office in writing via email at disputeresolution@smu.edu. Nonattendance or notifying the instructor does not constitute an official withdrawal. The following is a representative schedule of tuition refund policies for withdrawals:

| | |
|---|------|
| On or prior to Payment Due Date | 100% |
| 1 st day through 5 th day | 90% |
| 6th through 10th day of term | 50% |
| 11th through 15th day of term | 25% |
| 16th through 20th day of term | 10% |
| After 20th day of term | 0% |

For Medical Withdrawals, a daily pro-rata refund is allowed. To qualify for Medical Withdrawal, your personal physician must provide a written explanation of the illness to the Director of the SMU Health Center who will, in turn, rule on the case.

i. Grade of Incomplete

If a student has attended at least 50% of a specific class and is currently passing, but is unable to complete the work before the end of the term due to extenuating circumstances, the student and the instructor may agree on a grade of "Incomplete". **The student is responsible for informing the DR office of this decision AND completing the Grade of Incomplete Agreement with their instructor.** Students who have been granted grades of Incomplete by their instructor must complete the coursework within one calendar year from the date of the

original class. Incompletes left open after that time may become a grade of 'F.' A maximum of two (6 hours) concurrently held grades of Incomplete is allowed. Students who accumulate a total of three grades of Incomplete will be put on probation and not allowed to enroll further until the total is reduced. A student cannot graduate with any grade of Incomplete. Once a student commits to re-take a class to make up an Incomplete, the same course drop/withdrawal policies and provisions are in effect.

j. *Academic Probation*

Graduate Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00. If in any semester a student fall below this GPA, the student will be placed on probation for one term. If at the end of the probationary term the cumulative GPA is not up to 3.00, the student will be notified and removed from the program. **It is the student's responsibility to be cognizant of their status; Academic Probation is automatic once the GPA falls below 3.0.**

k. *Grade Dispute*

If a student contends that a grade should be different from the one assigned, the student must first discuss the matter with the course instructor to determine if the grade resulted from error or misunderstanding. At the time of this initial conversation, the course instructor may ask the student to provide a written petition requesting a change of grade. Further policies and protocols are stipulated at the following link:

http://smu.edu/provost/Appeals_of_Academic_Matters.pdf

l. *Student Competence*

Student behaviors (i.e. open-mindedness, kindness, patience, communicative style, integrity, honesty, respect, classroom demeanor, etc.) are evaluated by faculty during the academic term. Faculty concerns regarding student competence are addressed so that a remediation process may begin. **Failure to progress, adhere to sanctions, disruptive behaviors, or refusal to comply with competency expectations may result in student expulsion from the Program in Dispute Resolution and SMU.**

Procedures for Identifying Student Competency Concerns:

1. Instructor completes the Competency Concern and Remediation Report form that details the specific concern(s) regarding student behavior as well as steps/procedures for remediation.
2. Instructor discusses the report with the student and provides a copy to the student. The concern will be shared with the Dispute Resolution faculty and Program Director as an informational item during the next faculty meeting.
3. The student may select one of three responses to the expressed faculty concern:
 - a. Follow the counsel for remediation described in the report.
 - b. Exit from the program.
 - c. Refuse to accept the evaluation and remediation, and appeal in writing to the Program Director within three days of the initial Instructor/student meeting. If a student fails to contact the Director within three days, the instructor specifications stand and the student **MUST** comply or withdrawal/expulsion procedures begin.
4. In the case of appeal, the Program Director will mediate a decision between the instructor and student regarding the evaluation and remedial report specifications. If no resolution results, a committee composed of one instructor-designated faculty member, one Director-appointed faculty member, and one student-designated faculty member will convene to evaluate the competency issue.

5. Each party, the instructor and student, provide the committee with written statements regarding the unresolved conflict surrounding the student competency evaluation. Additionally, a hearing will be held where each party verbally communicates their concern/grievance.

6. The committee will either waive the remediation stipulations or enforce the remediation stipulations within ten days of the hearing. The terms of the committee's decision will be presented in writing to the Program Director, instructor, and student.

7. Each party has ten days to appeal the decision in writing to the Dean of the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development.

8. All records in this process are retained in the student's academic file.

m. Social Media Guidelines

Students in Dispute Resolution are expected to exhibit a high degree of interpersonal effectiveness, emotional maturity, and good judgment. Because of the ease with which the public, colleagues, and current or prospective employers can access information from professional and personal information published on the web, students should take care to present themselves in the best possible light. It is expected that students will recognize the SMU Student Handbook's Code of Conduct application to the use of Social Media specifically section 2.09, "Students will, at all times and in all activities, respect the rights of others, maintain responsible behavior conducive to the teaching and learning environment, and uphold the integrity of the University both on and off campus." SMU's program in Dispute Resolution encourages civil discussion of issues pertinent to the program and related events.

Inappropriate remarks on social media venues such as Facebook, Twitter and others may result in disciplinary action.

n. Graduation

Graduate Certificate: Students must successfully complete 21 hours of study in the Dispute Resolution Graduate Certificate Program. Students must also submit an 'Application for Candidacy to Graduate' form (ACG) at the beginning of the term in which their 21 hours are to be completed. The form is available in the DR office. Once the form is filled out, please submit to the DR staff for processing. Graduation occurs three times a year, December, May and August, there is no formal ceremony.

Masters: Students must successfully complete 42 hours of study and submit an Application for Candidacy to Graduate (ACG) form which can be found in **My.SMU**. Deadlines for this form's submission are posted in the Academic Calendar. Generally, the form must be submitted several months in advance of the graduation date. Masters students wear regalia and hoods, and may participate in the main campus ceremonies in December and May. The SMU Registrar's office maintains a website that fully explains commencement, it can be found at <http://www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/Registrar/AcademicCeremonies>.

7. Important Websites

| | |
|--|---|
| my.SMU.edu <i>Register, check grades, check financials, release holds, make tuition payments, print unofficial transcripts, schedule of individual classes</i> | https://My.smu.edu |
|--|---|

DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROGRAM

**6401 Airline Road
Harold Clark Simmons Hall, Suite 201
Dallas, TX 75275**

HOURS: 9:00 – 4:00 PM, Monday – Friday

PHONE: (214) 768-4500

WEB ADDRESS: smu.edu/resolution

**STAFF: Program Chair – Dr. Greta Davis
Director – Dr. Betty Snyder
Program Specialist - Jessica Lunce**

The Dispute Resolution program is part of the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development.

Statement on Confidentiality and Emotional Safety

In order to provide a safe learning environment for students and to protect the confidentiality of practice clients, role play, case material and class members, students will discuss cases and other's personal information, reactions, etc. only while in class or privately with other class members. It is the responsibility of each class member to treat classmates with respect and integrity, thus providing emotional safety for each other during class activities. Failure to do so can result in termination from the Program.

Acknowledgement of receipt and comprehension of the *Dispute Resolution Graduate Certificate and Master of Arts Programs Student Handbook*.

I have received a copy of the student handbook and I understand the program requirements and my responsibilities.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Please submit signed form to Dispute Resolution Program Office.