



1500 North Patterson Street  
Valdosta, Georgia 31698



## WHAT ARE MY CHOICES?

### ADR

LEGAL AFFAIRS OFFICE  
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICE

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

ADMISSIONS APPEALS

STUDENT JUDICIAL  
COMMITTEE

# Alternative Dispute Resolution

HUMAN  
RESOURCES

COUNCIL ON  
STAFF AFFAIRS

## -- What Is it?

### FOR FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS --

In 1994, the University System of Georgia Board of Regents' initiative and The Consortium on Negotiation and Conflict Resolution established a system-wide conflict resolution program as a way to:

1. communicate differences without opposition
2. resolve conflict at lowest level
3. improve institutional environment
4. lead the development of ADR in higher education

As a response to the Board of Regents' directive, VSU created a committee and chose Co-liaisons to the University System Advisory Committee.

Several members of the ADR committee have participated in training seminars and certification classes with future training sessions planned. Committee members are trained to maintain *confidentiality* as allowed under the law, and *neutrality*.

The goals of ADR are simple: to be efficient, to be fair, to reduce future conflict, and to produce outcomes. Other goals include the encouragement of communication, commitment to excellence and striving for community wellness. With the help of all parties concerned, these goals can be met.

**THERE IS ANOTHER WAY!**

For more information about ADR at VSU, contact Co-liaisons  
Dr. Martha Laughlin at (229) 249-4961 or Rebecca Murphy at (229) 259-5106.

## ADVANTAGES TO USING ADR

- Reduced Cost of Resolving Claims & Disputes
- Confidentiality (disclosure of appropriate information to others will only be released consistent with state and federal law)
- Preserves Relationships
- Parties Generally Regain Control
- Less Management Distraction and Stress as Compared to Litigation
- Ability to Provide Creative Solutions to Problems
- Parties' Stories Can be Told *AND* Heard

## WHAT ADR DOES NOT MEDIATE

- Salary Issues
- University Policy
- Criminal Matters

Mediation is a voluntary, informal, structured process in which an impartial third party, called a mediator, helps disputing parties to generate and evaluate options for reaching a mutually acceptable agreement. A mediator does NOT have the power to impose an agreement on the parties.

- National Association for Mediators in Education



Valdosta State University is a Regional University of the University System of Georgia. It is an equal opportunity educational institution which does not discriminate against any applicant for admission or any student or employee based on the sex, race, religion, color, national origin or disability of the individual.

## WHERE DO I TURN NEXT?

If efforts to resolve a conflict between parties are not successful, or if you would like to know more about ADR, contact a member of the ADR committee.

Dr. Louis Levy, Vice President ..... 333-5950  
for Academic Affairs Office

Ms. Laverne Lewis-Gaskins, ..... 333-5351  
Legal Affairs

Dr. Martha Laughlin, Marriage ..... 249-4961  
and Family Therapy

MEDIATION - Friendly or diplomatic intervention, usually by consent or invitation, for settling differences between persons, nations, etc.  
- Webster's New World Dictionary

## Sample Cases

Molly works in the Information Department. Bobby is her boss. She has had difficulties arriving to work on time and is always apologetic, but Bobby feels she is just making excuses. Anger and resentment build as the issue remains unresolved after several heated discussions. The two find it difficult to converse without arguing. Bobby does not want to fire her - being a single mom Molly needs the job to support her children. Molly truly makes an effort to be at work on time but trying to get three young children ready for school can be difficult. Short of a formal disciplinary action, they elect to contact an alternative dispute resolution committee member.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ben teaches microbiology at a large university. Elissa is a graduate assistant in the same department. They have been working on a project that, if successful, will yield many publication opportunities. Elissa is excited about the publication aspect of her research since she hopes to teach at a university. Having conducted a great deal of the actual experiments, she feels confident she will be cited as the co-author in any publication dealing with their research. Imagine her surprise when she read the departmental newsletter and realized that an article about their research hardly mentioned her name. Bob, however, was mentioned repeatedly as the principal investigator and sole author of any resulting papers. After several visits to Bob's office, the department head's office, and the dean's office, with no satisfactory results, Elissa decided to contact a member of the alternative dispute resolution committee.