Applying to the Dispute Resolution Program

This illustrated walkthrough is designed to help you get going on your application to the Dispute Resolution graduate program at Wayne State University. The guide is also available as a PDF. Applications for Fall Semester are due August 1, and applications for Winter Semester are due November 1. Applications are not accepted for the Spring/Summer admission.

Dispute Resolution Program Admissions - Minimal Requirements Overview

The M.A. in Dispute Resolution (MADR) Program requires applicants minimally to have

- already received their undergraduate degree
- attained a minimum GPA of 3.0 (=B) in their upper-division coursework
- prepared an academic/professional personal statement on their interest in the Field (described in more detail below)
- three letters from references who can speak to their character and readiness

The Graduate Certificate in Dispute Resolution require applicants minimally to have

- a BA and Graduate Degree in hand, or is enrolled in a WSU Graduate program currently
- a minimum GPA of 3.0 (=B)
- prepared an academic/professional personal statement on their interest in the Field (described in more detail below)
- two letters from references, at least one of which must be from an academic source.
Applying to the Dispute Resolution Program

Not necessarily required for DR Students

- We do not require a GRE score
- Prior coursework in conflict resolution, alternative dispute resolution, and/or peace and conflict studies is desirable but not required.
- Although the program is based in the Department of Communication, because DR is such an interdisciplinary field, a minimum number of prior communication courses is not expected.
- A writing sample beyond your personal statement is recommended but not required.

The Joint JD/MADR in Dispute Resolution

Our joint program with the law school works to shorten combined time and credits needed for completion of both degrees. However, it only works if a student applies and is accepted to WSU Law School first, then during their first year of law school applies to and is accepted to the MADR program second.

Letters of Reference

Graduates of the Dispute Resolution program often work as helping professionals. As such, a compassionate and trustworthy character, willingness to engage with dispute resolution as both a scholarly and professional field of practice, and readiness to do graduate-level scholarly and applied work is essential. Applicants to the MA program are required to submit three letters of reference that speak to these qualities, with applicants to the Certificate program only requiring two letters.
Visit our departmental website at http://comm.wayne.edu/ma/ for basic information about the MADR program. You may end up coming back in the future to get Forms and Resources useful to admitted students, so you might want to bookmark it for reference.
Visit the MADR Learning Hub for Additional Inspiration

Visit [http://madr.comm.wayne.edu](http://madr.comm.wayne.edu) to get a feeling for the program's goals and orientation. Lots of photos and links to resources as well as some audio interviews with core faculty provide additional context about the program. The site works fine on phones and tablets and provides a visual introduction to the program.
Applying to the Dispute Resolution Program

Scroll Down to Review Curriculum Options

Select "Read More" to review the core curriculum via our program's curriculum checksheets (all are PDFs).

You can review the MA Checksheet, the Graduate Certificate Checksheet and the joint JD/MADR Program Checksheet.

If a program looks like a good fit to you, it may be time to take the plunge and apply!
Visit the Graduate School Admissions Page and hit the "Apply Now" button

Go to http://wayne.edu/apply#fndtn-graduate and click on Apply Now button.

Once you are into the form you'll go through three "phases"

**Step 1:** Select Starting Term & Residency Information (see next image)
Applying to the Dispute Resolution Program

**Step 2:** Select Major Program - (Dispute Resolution - M.A. or Dispute Resolution - Graduate Certificate) and provide your Contact Information & Information on Previous School(s) you have attended.

**Step 3:** Answer Questions & Submit Required University and Program-Specific Documentation. Applicants to the MA in Dispute Resolution will need to supply a **Personal Statement** and **3 Letters of Reference.** At least one letter should address your prior academic experience and readiness for graduate work.

When the full application is completed, the Academic Director of the MA in Dispute Resolution Program will review your application package and make an admissions decision.

A more detailed walk-through of the online application form is provided below so you’ll know what to expect.
Walk-Through of the Application Forms

Picking the actual term when you want to start is important. If you apply for a term that arises before you are actually ready to begin, you'll have to do an additional application for the later term and request that your materials get "rolled over" to the new application. This makes extra work for everybody, so choose wisely.
Choose Dispute Resolution as your Academic Program

Select either the MA or Graduate Certificate in Dispute Resolution. Note that although the DR Program is located in the Department of Communication, it has its own program designation as "Dispute Resolution - MA", NOT "Communication - MA"
Graduates of the Dispute Resolution program often work as helping professionals. As such, a compassionate and trustworthy character, willingness to engage with dispute resolution as both a scholarly and professional field of practice, and readiness to do graduate-level scholarly and applied work are essential. Applicants to the MA program are required to submit three letters of reference that speak to these qualities, with applicants to the Certificate program only requiring two letters.

You'll use the "Initiate Reference Letter" link to send a request to a person who has agreed to write a letter for you. You'll need their email address. You probably should alert your references that they will be receiving an email from WSU with a link to the admissions website where they can upload their completed letter for you. If it goes to their spam mailbox, we could be waiting a long time for a response!
Complete Admissions Application Tasks (Green Checkmarks are Good!)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiate Application</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Optional) Additional Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Degree-Posted Transcript</td>
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<tr>
<td>Already earned your bachelor’s degree?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Request an official degree-posted transcript to be sent directly to WSU from the issuing institution.</td>
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<td>Electronic transcripts will be accepted if they are delivered securely from the registrar of the issuing institution directly to the Office of Graduate Admissions - <a href="mailto:gradadmissions@wayne.edu">gradadmissions@wayne.edu</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Optional) Financial Aid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Letter of Recommendation 1</td>
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<td>Letter of Recommendation 2</td>
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<td>Letter of Recommendation 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Statement</td>
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Your goal is to check off all the tasks prior to the Application Deadline (Aug 1 for Fall Term or November 1 for Winter Term). Some of the tasks on the application form...
Applying to the Dispute Resolution Program

take time to complete, such as receiving the requested letters, getting final transcripts from previous programs, etc. so leave yourself enough time.

One of the most important application elements is your **Personal Statement.** 500-700 words is a good length. Here's suggested topics you might cover:

- What makes you well suited to pursue a Master of Arts in Dispute Resolution?

- How does your prior academic course of study or work experience connect with Dispute Resolution?

- How do you currently use conflict resolution skills and practice in your everyday life?

- What are your personal life or career goals and how does this program fit into those goals?
Congratulations yourself for seeking to expand your knowledge and skills!

After your application has been reviewed, you will be notified by email of the decision. Good luck!

If you have additional questions, you can contact the MADR Director, Bill Warters, at w.warters@wayne.edu or 313 993-7482

Thinking/Planning Ahead:

One of the first tasks after acceptance is deciding how many courses you'll take per semester and then selecting the appropriate courses (after consulting with your advisor, the MADR Program Director) and getting registered for them. A load of 3 courses a term is considered full-time, but most MADR students, due to work or family responsibilities, opt to take 2 courses a term. You can view some suggested starting rotations using an online drag-and-drop course rotation planning tool specifically for MADR students. By the end of your first year in the program, you'll need to complete an approved "Plan of Work" form that outlines your proposed course of study. The online tool can help prepare for this. Part of this process involves thinking about the kind of electives that you want to take (6 or more elective credits are needed for the MA).