“MEDIATION IS AN EFFECTIVE WAY FOR TWO OR MORE PEOPLE TO RESOLVE DISPUTES. BY WORKING WITH A NEUTRAL MEDIATOR, INDIVIDUALS CAN RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES IN A POSITIVE, PRODUCTIVE MANNER THAT IS MUTUALLY AGREEABLE. THIS RESULT MAKES THE MEDIATION PROCESS AN IDEAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGY FOR MANY PROBLEMS THAT ARISE IN A CAMPUS COMMUNITY.”
- BART MERKLE, VICE PROVOST FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS AND DEAN OF STUDENTS

“MEDIATION ALLOWS THE PARTIES TO REACH THEIR OWN SOLUTIONS TO A PROBLEM. THIS MEANS THAT THERE’S TYPICALLY A CONCLUSION TO THE ISSUE THAT BOTH PARTIES CAN LIVE WITH. UNLIKE LITIGATION OR ARBITRATION, BOTH PARTIES CAN BE WINNERS IN MEDIATION.”
- CATHERINE JONES-RIKKERS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

“CONFlict RESOLUTION HELPS EACH SIDE TO MORE CLEARLY IDENTIFY ISSUES AND THEN PROVIDES A NEUTRAL AND SUPPORTIVE SETTING IN WHICH THE PERSONS CAN WORK THROUGH THOSE ISSUES.”
- JON JELLEMA, ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

“I HAVE WORKED AT GVSU FOR MANY YEARS. THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I NEEDED A CLEARER PERSPECTIVE OF AN EXPERIENCE AND THE MEDIATION SERVICES OFFERED AT GVSU WERE VERY BENEFICIAL IN MY SITUATION.”
- ELIZABETH EUBANKS, COMPUTER OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR

What is mediation?
Mediation is a nonjudicial, confidential, and voluntary process that helps people resolve their own conflicts and design their own solutions.

Disputing parties agree to meet with two neutral facilitators called mediators. Mediators guide them step-by-step through a problem-solving process. They help the parties define the issues, identify common interests, clarify needs, and generate relevant options.

The disputing parties agree to share information, communicate in good faith, make decisions, and ultimately create a mutually acceptable agreement that resolves the issue.

Advantages of using mediation:
- Mediation settles disputes privately and confidentially.
- Mediation focuses on problem-solving rather than placing blame.
- Mediation is flexible and creative. Because solutions are tailor made for the particular situation, there is a high likelihood that solutions will be implemented.

There is little risk because agreements are voluntary. In case of an impasse, all appropriate legal and procedural options, such as the grievance procedure or complaint process are still available.

Mediation provides a professional and constructive way to handle disputes before they escalate.

All parties finalize an agreement they helped create. Mediation leads to a “win-win” solution.

How long does mediation take?
Many disputes can be resolved in one mediation session. Sessions may last from one to three hours and additional sessions can be scheduled if needed. Mediation sessions will be scheduled whenever possible at a location agreeable to all participants.

What kinds of problems can be resolved through mediation?
- Interpersonal disputes (e.g. co-worker problems)
- Workplace conflicts
- Lifestyle issues
- Racial/cultural issues
- Faculty/staff conflicts
- Supervisory disputes

Who are the mediators?
GVSU mediators are faculty and staff members trained in the process of mediation.

How can I find out if my concern is appropriate for mediation?
Call Sue Sloop, work life consultant, Human Resources Office, at (616) 331-2215. If mediation is appropriate, Sue will coordinate the steps necessary for setting it up.