



School for Conflict Analysis  
and Resolution

# MS

## Handbook of Academic Procedures

For Students and Advisors  
A Guide to S-CAR's MS in Conflict Analysis and Resolution

This Handbook is a summary of information and guidelines for completing the MS program at S-CAR successfully. It is intended to help both students and faculty advisors answer the common questions that arise, and to ensure that the internal procedures of S-CAR are consistent, clear and fair from one student to the next. However, it is only a guide, and not a legally binding document. All S-CAR students, however, are bound by the rules contained in the University Handbook and the University Catalog, which should also be consulted about requirements.



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## Course Numbering

GMU course numbers signify the following:

<u>Course Numbers</u>	<u>Student Level</u>
100 - 200	Lower level undergraduate
300 - 400	Upper level undergraduate
500 - 600	Masters level
700	Masters or Doctoral level
800 - 900	Doctoral level

Undergraduate courses cannot be counted toward graduate degree requirements. An advisor may recommend undergraduate courses, however, as required preparation for graduate work.

500 level courses are intended for students in the masters program, they may be taken by advanced undergraduates, provided instructor's written permission is secured. However, if they are used toward the undergraduate degree, they cannot also be applied toward a graduate degree.

600 & 700 level courses are intended for students in the masters or doctoral program, or by permission of the instructor.

800 level courses are intended for doctoral students only; masters students can take with permission by instructor.

900 level courses are for doctoral students only.

## Certificate Courses

Courses 502, and 650-683 are open to students enrolled in S-CAR's Graduate Certificate Program. These courses may be taken by S-CAR MS or PhD students as elective credits. Certificate students have priority registration for these courses before MS or PhD students. MS and PhD students can add on a certificate to their degree program. See registration section note below.

## Non-Degree Enrollment and Students Enrolled in Other Mason Programs

Enrollment in S-CAR courses by students who have not been admitted to an S-CAR degree program is possible only with permission of the instructor with the following exceptions: CONF 501- only the section(s) for non-majors are open to non-S-CAR students. Permission of instructor is not needed for the non-majors section.

Core Masters Courses: CONF 601, 610, 620, 642, are open only to S-CAR MS students.

## Advisors

Each student admitted to a degree program is assigned a faculty advisor in addition to their staff advisors. Faculty advisors are full-time members of the S-CAR faculty who should be able to answer most questions about the requirements and options involved in completing a course of study. The faculty advisor serves as a mentor to the student. Students should also consult a staff advisor within S-CAR graduate student services for advising questions that may be technical in nature. Students can see who their faculty advisor is by logging into Patriot Web (<http://patriotweb.gmu.edu>), clicking on the student services tab and then clicking on student information.

Plan of Study: Each student should meet with his or her faculty advisor (mentor) and staff advisor before registering for classes. The student and the faculty advisor should discuss the student's interests, long-term goals, personal matters that might impact study at S-CAR, and special needs. The student and the advisor should develop a plan of study tentatively selecting all of the courses the student will take. The student is not 'bound' by this plan. However, the plan information helps the curriculum committee develop and schedule courses to meet students' interests. The student should keep a copy of this 'plan of study'. It may be useful to identify a field or organization the student hopes to work in and identify courses and practice opportunities that will assist the student secure post graduation employment.

Plan of study sheets can be found on the S-CAR MS Web Site: <http://scar.gmu.edu/ms-program>

Updates: Each student should meet with his or her staff advisor at least once per semester to review this plan and make changes. Students can and should ask for academic, career or personal advice. Faculty and Staff may refer some personal issues to professional counseling through the GMU Counseling Center. Incoming students are required to meet with their faculty advisor and staff advisor within the first two months of their first semester at S-CAR.

Changing Advisors: If a student wishes to change advisors, they can ask another member of the faculty to become their advisor. If the faculty member agrees, the change should be reported to the MS program director and the graduate student services staff. A student may also ask the MS program director to assign another advisor.

## Program Directors

Each academic program has a program director. Directors are an additional source of advising information and can fill in for advisors on sabbatical or other leave. For the year 2016-2017 they are:

- Dr. Terrance Lyons, PhD Program Director
- Dr. Agneskia Paczynska, MS Program Director
- Dr. Mara Schoeny, Graduate Certificate Program Director
- Dr. Mara Schoeny, Undergraduate Program Director

Advisors or students who are unsure about policy or procedures should seek clarification from the Handbook of Academic Procedures first. If the question is not covered in the handbook or additional clarification is necessary, contact the appropriate program director or student services director.

## Dean

The top "tier" of the advisory system is the Dean. The Dean will "field" advising problems that cannot be dealt with by students' personal advisors or by the appropriate program director. The Dean should be the last person approached, not the first.

### Dean

Ph.D. Director	Masters Director
Faculty Advisor /Staff Advisor	Faculty Advisor/Staff Advisor
Advisee	Advisee

## Registration and Schedule of Classes

Registration for classes is done through <https://patriotweb.gmu.edu/>. When a student is admitted they receive a G# and PIN to use for registration. Problems with registration involving permission to register should be addressed to the student services director. Technical problems should be addressed with the Registrar's office, 703-993-2441 or by viewing the technical support information at <http://registrar.gmu.edu/students/registration/patriotweb.html>. Each semester's schedule of classes is available at <https://patriotweb.gmu.edu/>. The schedule is regularly updated.

## Registration for Partial Term Courses

Courses that do not meet for the full term, often CONF 795 or Certificate Courses may have different add/drop dates. Please see the Registrar's Office web site (<http://registrar.gmu.edu>) for add/drop dates for partial semester courses. It is the student's responsibility to add/drop courses by the appropriate deadlines to avoid late fees.

## Credit Hours per Semester/ Full Time Status

Graduate students are considered full time if they are enrolled in at least 9 credits per semester or if they hold a full time assistantship (20 hours a week) and are enrolled in at least 6 credits per semester. Graduate students who are enrolled in dissertation credits (either 998 or 999) are considered full time if they are enrolled in at least 6 credits per semester, regardless of whether they hold an assistantship. Graduate students who have completed the minimum number of credits required by their degree program, including the minimum number of credits of 799 or 999 required by their degree program, are considered full time if they are registered for at least 1 credit of 799 or 999, and their advisors and department chairs certify each semester that they are working full time on the dissertation. Students registering for 1 credit of 799 or 999 and claiming full time equivalency are responsible for getting the [Full Time Equivalence Form](#) which is also found on the Registrar web site under Forms (<http://registrar.gmu.edu>) signed by their advisors and the director each semester and sending the completed form to Financial Aid. Note that different criteria for full-time status may apply for tuition, verification, loan deferral, and financial aid.

Graduate students may not take more than 12 credits in a semester unless approval is granted by the program director. Students should contact the appropriate program director who will evaluate the overload request. Once approved, the student services director will help with the paperwork that is required for the Registrar to process the request.

## Permission to Register

Non-degree students or students from other degree programs must first contact the faculty teaching the course they are interested in taking. Instructors can issue overrides for their own courses through [PatriotWeb.gmu.edu](http://PatriotWeb.gmu.edu). Alternately the instructor can contact the director of graduate student services and request an override be issued to allow the student to register.

## CONF 690/890 Registration (Applied Practice & Theory)

The process for participating in these year long (starting Fall semester) practicum projects begins the Spring before the student plans to participate. Each Spring, the APT coordinator hosts an APT information session in which possible projects for the next year are overviewed. For registration purposes, prior to the finalization of the teams, students can register for any section of CONF 690 or CONF 890. When the teams are finalized, students will be assisted in matching up their registration with that of their team members.

## CONF 694 Internship Registration

Students interested in completing an internship for credit should contact the Experiential Learning Director. Registration for internship credits can be done for Summer, Fall, or Spring Semesters. Students can register for 3 or 6 internship credits. Once you receive approval from the Experiential Learning Director to register for thesis, he/she will issue an override that will enable registration for CONF 694. Further information on internship requirements and grading can be found later in this handbook.

## CONF 697/897 Directed Reading Registration

Registration for CONF 697 or 897 is completed using the individualized section form at [Individual Section Form \(Example\)](#). The form should be submitted after the student has confirmed with a faculty member to oversee their directed reading. Confirmation should be sent by email to the student services director. This form should be signed by the S-CAR MS Program Director and S-CAR Dean and then forwarded to the Registrar's office by fax to 3-4032 or campus mail to MS 3D1. Additional information about requirements for directed reading can be found below.

## CONF 797 Thesis Proposal Registration

Students interested in completing a thesis should register for CONF 797 – Thesis Proposal (1 credit) the semester before they plan to begin the thesis (if not earlier). If the student takes CONF 797 and later decides to not complete a thesis, the CONF 797 credit will count towards their M.S. elective requirements.

## CONF 799 Thesis Research Registration

Students with an accepted thesis proposal should contact their Thesis Chair or student services director to receive the CRN number to register for CONF 799. The number is specific to the faculty chairing the thesis and changes each fall, spring and summer term. Once a Master's student has taken 6 credits of 799 the student can then register for just one credit a semester of 799/999. Once you start registering for CONF 799 you must maintain continuous registration. Please check with Financial Aid or OIPS about maintaining full time status for Student Loan or VISA purposes. PatriotWeb will use a default registration of 1 credit. Students registering for more than one credit should then adjust the number of credits in PatriotWeb.

## Registration for Undergraduate Credit

In no circumstances can undergraduate courses be counted for graduate credit. There are, however, situations in which graduate students may wish to take undergraduate courses (for example to fulfill a language requirement) even though this courses do not count as graduate credit hours. In order to do that, a student submits a signed letter to the registrar's office that contains the student's name, date, G number, phone number, the course information and the phrase "I am a graduate student who wishes to enroll in an undergraduate course for undergraduate credit". The student should sign the letter and fax it to 3-4668 or deliver it to the registrar's office.

## Certificate Courses

Students wishing to register for certificate courses as electives for the MS program are allowed to without seeking individual permission. However, to give certificate students priority in these classes, these courses will not be opened to MS students until certificate students have had the opportunity to complete registration. The date courses will open to

other students will be announced through email. MS students can take certificate courses and have these classes count as elective credit towards their primary degree.

## Adding on a Certificate

Students wishing to add on a certificate to their MS program must seek individual permission from the Graduate Certificate Program Coordinator. An "Add a Secondary Program" form must be completed to be submitted to the Registrar's Office. Adding a certificate to the masters program will require students to complete a total of 47 credit hours. This process should be completed within the first-year of MS study.

## Non-Degree (Extended Studies) Credit

Twelve semester hours of GMU Non-Degree (Extended Studies) credit may be transferred into the MS or PhD program. Student should fill out the [Transfer of Credit Form \(Example\)](#); have it signed by the advisor. After the advisor has approved the form it must be submitted to the appropriate Program Director and the Dean for signatures before being submitted to the Registrar's office.

## Transfer of Credit

Up to six semester hours of graduate level credit taken before acceptance into the masters program may be transferred from an outside regionally accredited institution provided the hours are for course work relevant to the student's program at S-CAR.

- Eligibility - A student must be admitted to full degree status to transfer credit.
- No Double Credit - Credit previously used toward a degree at GMU or any other institution may not be used again for a GMU Master's degree. (Certificate programs are not considered degree programs).
- Minimum Grade - A minimum grade of "B" must be earned for transfer credit. Grades such as "Pass" or "Satisfactory" may not transfer.
- Residency of Credit - Credit accepted for transfer must have been earned within six years from the time of admission.
- Course Material - Relevant course material (syllabus, reading list, etc.) should be submitted with the Transfer of Credit Form to the advisor.
- Transcript - A complete copy of the transcript showing the credit to be transferred must be attached to the Transfer of Credit Form. This is not necessary for GMU courses. Xerox copies of official transcripts kept at S-CAR are acceptable. If S-CAR does not have a copy, you may obtain one from your master file in the GMU Office of Student Records.

A student who wishes to transfer credit and who meets the above requirements should complete a [Transfer of Credit Form \(Example\)](#), and submit it to his or her advisor for review and approval. The advisor and student should identify the GMU equivalent to the credits earned at another institution. If the course will be used to fill an elective, mark CONF 695 as the GMU Course Equivalent. After the advisor has approved the Transfer of Credit form it must be submitted to the appropriate Program Director and the Dean for signatures before being submitted to the Registrar's office.



## Substitutions

It is rare that a course taken outside of S-CAR can substitute for an S-CAR required course. All requests for substitutions must be generated by the student's advisor. If the course was taken outside of Mason, the advisor should identify on the [Transfer of Credit Form \(Example\)](#), the GMU equivalent course that is being replaced. If the course was taken within Mason and is being substituted for an S-CAR course, the advisor should fill out the Substitution/Wavier Form at [Substitution Form \(Example\)](#), and indicate which S-CAR requirement is being replaced. The advisor should recommend the substitution, providing the program director all explanatory or supportive materials needed. After the advisor has approved the Transfer of Credit form it must be submitted to the appropriate Program Director and the Dean for signatures before being submitted to the Registrar's office.

## Waivers

Students who have had the equivalent of a required course through work experience or through course work elsewhere or in a previous Mason Degree, which do not meet the requirements for a Transfer of Credit, can request that the advisor recommend to the program director that the requirement to take that particular S-CAR course be "waived." The advisor fills out the [Substitution/Waiver Form \(example\)](#) form and submits it for approval to the appropriate program director. A waiver does not give the student credit for the course, it simply means that they do not need to take the required course, but must take an additional elective course to ensure they meet the credit hour requirements of the degree.

## Non-S-CAR Electives

Students wishing to take a course outside of the MS core program, including courses at other Mason departments, through the consortium, transfer credits or courses primarily intended for graduate certificate students must first discuss with their advisor how this course fits in with their academic and career goals. If the advisor agrees that the non-S-CAR course is an appropriate choice for the student, an e-mail should be sent from the advisor to the appropriate program director stating that the course has been approved by the advisor. The program director will include this information in the student's file. With advisor's approval, each student is eligible to include a **maximum of 6 credits** of electives from outside of the S-CAR program, including courses in other Mason departments, consortium courses, and transfer courses from other universities.

## Course Work Elsewhere

GMU allows students enrolled in degree programs to take courses at other accredited institutions and apply those credits to GMU degrees (Courses taken through the Consortium are not considered course work elsewhere, see below). Permission to take such courses must be obtained beforehand. Course Work Elsewhere forms [Coursework Elsewhere \(Example\)](#), must be approved before a student enrolls at another institution for credit which will be transferred to his/her S-CAR program. The Registrar enters a special registration for the semester(s) the student is away that keeps the student in active status at GMU. The following policies governing Course Work Elsewhere should be noted:

- Course work elsewhere is subject to the same policies as transfer credit listed above.
- Course work elsewhere counts toward the six-hour transfer credit limit from outside institutions.
- The student must have an official transcript sent directly from the outside university to S-CAR when the course has been completed.

As a rule, course work elsewhere should not be requested for a student's final semester. Exceptions may be made for extenuating circumstances.

## Consortium Courses

GMU is a member of the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area. The other schools included in the Consortium are:

- American University
- Catholic University
- University of Maryland in College Park
- Gallaudet University
- George Washington University
- University of the District of Columbia
- Georgetown University
- Howard University
- Trinity College
- Joint Military Intelligence College
- Marymount University
- National Defense University
- Southeastern University

Graduate students are eligible to enroll in courses through the consortium on a space available basis. Graduate students must be currently enrolled, in good academic standing, and in degree-seeking status. Students seeking to enroll in a Consortium course must obtain a Consortium Registration Packet from the Office of the Registrar, x 3-2439. Packets can also be obtained at the S-CAR office. The Registration form requires approval by the student's advisor, program director, and S-CAR's Dean. Signed forms are then turned in to the Registrar's office. Approved consortium registration requests must be received in the Consortium office **no later than two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester** at George Mason University. Further information is available at <http://www.gmu.edu/acadexcel/findex.html>

The following rules govern:

- One course per semester through the Consortium may be taken.
- Such a course cannot be taken through the Consortium if it is offered at GMU during the same semester.
- Such a course cannot be a joint program between GMU and another institution. Courses offered off-campus at George Washington University and American University are not open to Consortium registration.

- Such a course cannot be "audited."
- Courses resulting in "Satisfactory/No Credit" status may not be taken.

Registration in consortium courses is not guaranteed. Consortium registrations are on a space available basis. Registration is often not confirmed until very close to the beginning of the semester.

Consortium courses are recorded as residential credit on the student's GMU transcript and can be taken in addition to the six hours permitted as transfer credit. Such courses can be applied only to elective requirements. Students may only register for six credits of consortium credit during their GMU career. S-CAR students may only take a **total maximum of 6 credits** of electives from outside of the S-CAR program, including courses in other Mason departments, consortium courses, and transfer courses from other universities.

## Study Abroad

A variety of study abroad opportunities are available through the Mason Center for Global Education <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/cge/> Students should consult with their advisor before registering for CGE programs to ensure credit can be given for the program.

## Directed Readings

Under special circumstances, students may arrange to take a Directed Reading course, either numbered CONF 697 (for MS students) or 897 (for PhD). These can be arranged because:

1. A required course is not due to be scheduled for at least two semesters, thus unreasonably delaying graduation.
2. A student wishes to work with a particular member of the faculty on a specific topic not normally offered as part of their S-CAR program.

In such cases, the student may ask the professor responsible for that required course to substitute a "directed reading" course (CONF 697 or CONF 897) and cover the material independently. This route obviously should be used only in the instance of unavoidable hardship to the student (e.g. student leaving the area or major family illness); it is not intended as an alternative way of passing through the program. This courtesy can only be extended if it does not overburden faculty and prevent the smooth running of the program.

Procedure for arranging and undertaking a Directed Reading or Independent Study course is as follows:

1. The student should initially approach the faculty member to obtain approval for a Directed Reading course and to discuss and agree upon the nature and contents of the proposed course. Registration information is listed above.
2. An outline of the agreed course topic, together with a basic bibliography, should be written down after this initial discussion and deposited in the student's file, copies also being kept by the student, faculty member and MS or PhD Coordinator. At this initial stage, details of expected course work, notes on readings, exercises to be carried out and method

of grading should be agreed according to the wishes and working styles of student and faculty involved.

3. Regular meetings should be scheduled and records kept of the student's performance during the course. It is suggested that at least six meetings take place after the initial planning meeting, although this can be varied when appropriate.

4. If it is agreed that all or any substantial part of the final grade for a Directed Reading course is to be based upon a final paper, the topic should be approved at least four weeks before the last day of classes and handed in no later than the first day of Exam Week, to facilitate grading.

5. Incomplete grades will not be granted for Directed Reading courses, except in the case of a medical emergency.

## Grading

Letter grades are required by GMU for all course work credited toward a graduate degree. Credit is given for all passing grades.

"A" represents excellent work, above expectations, passing

"B" represents adequate work, meeting expectations, passing

"C" represents substandard work, below expectations, passing

"F" represents a failure to complete the requirements of a course, failing.

"S/NC" (Satisfactory/No Credit) An S grade reflects satisfactory work otherwise; the student receives no credit (NC). S and NC have no effect on the grade point average (GPA). S/NC Grades are given for CONF 797, 799, 998, 999.

"AB" (absent) is given when the student has received permission from the instructor to be absent from a final exam for a cause beyond reasonable control. A 'make up' exam must be offered within 10 days. At the end of ten days, if the grade is not converted, it automatically becomes an "F"

"IN" (incomplete) is given when all course requirements have been completed except for assigned papers or reports which the student has been compelled to postpone for reasons beyond the student's control. IN's are given at the discretion of the faculty member.

The S-CAR faculty has agreed that "reasons beyond the student's control" are illness of the student or of a member of his or her immediate family, or a work-related effort that takes the student out of the program for at least three weeks. It has also determined that INs should not be granted simply on the grounds that students have over-committed themselves.

Students should also be cautioned that GMU policy provides that: While a grade of IN remains on the transcript, it is treated as an unsatisfactory grade in determining probation, suspension, termination, or dismissal. Removal of IN's from the transcript may result in retroactive elimination of probation, suspension, termination, or dismissal.

IN grades must be completed by the end of the ninth week of the next semester. An individual faculty member could set a shorter deadline if he or she wishes. If not a Petition for Extension of Incomplete, [Incomplete Extension \(Example\)](#) must be submitted with the approval signature of the instructor and the Director. IN grades for graduating students must be completed within 6 weeks of the end of the semester or the student must change graduation terms.

"IX" (Incomplete, extended) is given by the Registrar's Office after receiving from the professor an official extension of time for a student to complete course work. IX affects the academic record the same way as IN.

"IP" (in progress) is given to show that work is underway when courses extend beyond one semester. Course instructors can issue "in progress" (IP) grades in only the following courses:

CONF 694	Internship
CONF 690 or 890	1st Semester only
CONF 797	Masters Thesis Proposal
CONF 799	Masters Thesis
CONF 998	Dissertation Proposal
CONF 999	Dissertation Research and Writing

IPs are not treated as unsatisfactory grades, nor are they subject to the time limits of incompletes.

"SP" (suspended progress) is given by the Director on advice of a student advisor when long-term uncontrollable events interrupt a student's course of study. The SP grade remains on the record until the course-work is completed.

## Grade Requirements

GMU requires a 3.0 GPA throughout graduate school, and in addition, does not permit more than two substandard (below "B"; C, D, or F are substandard) grades on courses taken to be applied towards a graduate degree. This is true even if all other grades are "A"s. If a student receives three (or more) substandard grades or 3 "F"s the student is eligible for dismissal from the program. The student must appeal their dismissal to S-CAR's Dean. If the appeal is granted, either the excess substandard courses must be retaken, with a higher grade or additional courses (with "A" or "B" grades) must be substituted toward your degree with the S-CAR Dean or program director permission. Graduate students must have a 3.0 GPA to graduate. If the student's GPA is not at least a 3.0 they will be required to take additional courses and obtain high grades in order to increase the GPA to at least the 3.0 level.

## Grade Changes

Grade Change forms are required to change IP and IN grades into letter grades, as well as to correct recording or calculation error in grades. These forms are available from the student services director and should be faxed when completed to 3-4032. Grade changes that are not changes of IP or IN grades must receive the approval of the Dean.

## Disputed grades

Students who think they were graded unfairly should speak with the course instructor, asking to have the grade reviewed. The instructor may change the grade, either up or down. If a student is still dissatisfied, she/he may ask the Dean to conduct a review. Information on policies regarding grade review can be found in the University Catalog.

## Withdrawal Policy

Graduate students who are enrolled in one or more courses are considered in attendance until they formally withdraw by having an official withdrawal form approved by the Dean of S-CAR.

For graduate students, withdrawal after the last day for dropping a course requires approval by the student's dean and is permitted only for non-academic reasons that prevent course completion.

Graduate students who stop attending all classes after the drop period without the Dean's approval to withdraw receive Fs in all courses.

Graduate students withdrawing before the final examinations in any semester or Summer Term forfeit credit for work done in that term.

Any student who wishes to withdraw from an S-CAR class after any Add/Drop period has passed must send a request to the S-CAR Dean, cc'd to the student services director outlining why they should be able to withdraw.

## Continuous Enrollment

Any student who does not enroll in at least 1 credit of course work for two or more consecutive semesters is considered to be an inactive student and must petition to re-enroll. Students completing a Master's Thesis or Doctoral Dissertation must enroll in at least one credit of CONF 799 or CONF 999 each fall and spring semester, once they have completed the required minimum number of credits. If the student will graduate during the summer term they must register for 1 credit of CONF 799 or CONF 999 for the summer term.

## Permission to Re-Enroll

Permission to re-enroll in courses must be obtained by all graduate students who have failed to enroll in at least one credit of course work for two or more semesters (not counting the Summer term) at GMU. Students must submit a [Permission to Re-enroll Form \(Example\)](#) to the appropriate program director for approval.

# Field Opportunities

## Internship (CONF 694)

The internship is intended to provide students with opportunities to: use and further develop applied conflict resolution skills; integrate theory and practice of conflict analysis and resolution; apply theory through practice; and network with professionals in the field to enhance employment opportunities. Experience does not necessarily have to be explicitly "hands on": interns need not actually be interveners, because such opportunities may not be readily available; rather, the goal is to get as close to analysis and resolution practice as possible. Internships may be used to fulfill part of the Master's degree Integration requirement, or may be taken for elective credit by MS or PhD students.

### *Internship for Credit*

Students taking an internship for credit are required to register and pay for three hours of CONF 694. CONF 694 will require of students at least 160 hours of supervised work on a project towards the analysis and/or resolution of conflict. Such work must be spelled out in a Memorandum of Agreement to be signed by the student, the site supervisor and the S-CAR director of field experience before the internship begins. If an MS student wishes to take 6 credits of CONF 694 for their integration requirement, they will have to complete at least 320 hours of supervised work on a project.

As part of the requirements for CONF 694, the student will submit to the director of field experience, a 25 to 40 page report (50-80 page report if completing 6 credits at once) that offers a critical reflection on the experience drawing upon their knowledge for purposes of evaluation and assessment. The paper provides a comprehensive report analyzing the individual's experience, integrating field experience with relevant theories and research drawn from coursework. In effect, the paper demands a critical reflection on the practice relevant to the agency's work. In such reflection, students retrieve some of the concepts, models, and theories they learned from other classes. Their own experiences, and the agency's work, are assessed with respect to the insight gained from these classes. The full-length paper is due at the end of the semester in which the student is enrolled. A portion of the student's grade will also be determined by the internship supervisor's evaluation. A syllabus with all the information on grading and requirements for CONF 694 is available here [CONF 694 Syllabus](#).

Students are encouraged to arrange their own internships; however, director of field experience is available to discuss internship possibilities and requirements. Additionally, information on possible internships is available from S-CAR's Career Development Office. Students are also encouraged to contact S-CAR alumni for internship possibilities.

### *Internship Not for Credit*

Many students choose to participate in internships with organizations to gain experience or make networking connections, but may choose not to use the internship for credit toward their S-CAR degree. S-CAR students are required to **NOTIFY** the appropriate program director and director of field experience of internships they are participating in that are not

for credit. Students who encounter difficulties with not for credit internships are encouraged to consult with their advisor, program director or director of field experience, who may be able to assist the student to ensure the internship experience is positive.

## Applied Practice and Theory (APT)

The Applied Practice and Theory Program (APT) is a six-credit course running year-long. It is designed to take the concepts presented in class and practiced in labs into real situations with real conflict and real consequences. Students work in teams integrating research and practice with theory development and applied ethics. There are domestic teams and international teams. Students who are interested in this option should express their interest in the spring of their first year so they can plug into the year-round activity. Each spring the director of field experience hosts an APT information session in which possible projects for the next year are overviewed.

APT may be used to satisfy the masters degree integration requirement (6 credits of CONF 690), or may be taken for elective credit by MS or PhD students (PhD students register for CONF 890). The year-long course can only be started in the fall semester.

## Graduation

A Graduate Application for Graduation must be filed by a student in order to graduate through <https://patriotweb.gmu.edu> under the student services tab. Information on graduation and commencement can be found at <http://registrar.gmu.edu/gif/index.html>

Submit the Graduate Application for Graduation through [Patriot Web](#) by clicking on "Student Services & Financial Aid". Graduation Applications are **due the semester before** a student graduates.

Please refer to the Graduation Office's website at <http://registrar.gmu.edu/grad/graduation> for relevant deadline dates. Students must be active (taking at least one course) during the semester in which they intend to graduate. If you miss the deadline to submit the application electronically through Patriotweb, you must then fill out and submit a paper copy of a Late Graduation Application to the S-CAR student services director. Students whose graduation has been delayed by 'incomplete' or 'in progress' grades must pay a special additional fee. The form for special registration is available at [Special Registration for Graduation Request \(Example\)](#). Students who plan to graduate in summer term must register for at least one credit for summer term. Students finishing a thesis or dissertation over the summer must be registered for at least one credit of CONF 799 or CONF 999.

## "Differences of Opinion"

As noted at the outset of this Handbook, S-CAR functions within the aegis of the University. S-CAR cannot arbitrarily waive or change University requirements. Every attempt has been made to insure that the options described herein fall within GMU guidelines, but if there is any doubt, students should check with their advisor. If advisors have questions, they should check with the PhD or MS program director and obtain written clarification before giving students approval. Within S-CAR, it is the Dean's and/or PhD or MS Director's job to see that all students receive consistent treatment. Students should obtain written approval for any special agreements made with individual faculty.



## S-CAR Career Development

The depth and range of conflicts facing the world today has significantly deepened the need for knowledgeable, well-trained experts who can work to resolve these problems. Amid the growing effort to provide comprehensive education to nurture the field of conflict resolution, the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR) stands as a beacon. S-CAR offers tailored career development services for all enrolled S-CAR students. Services include individual career counseling assistance, resume reviews, professional panels and speakers centered around specific conflict resolution career paths, on-campus interviews and alumni networking support. S-CAR frequently posts job, internship and fellowship opportunities specific for S-CAR students and alumni.

## S-CAR Community Forum

- Join the S-CAR Community Forum, an academic, professional and social network for S-CAR students, faculty, staff and alumni where you can create your own profile page listing your expertise and research interests.
- Here you can view messages from the department, job/internship/fellowship postings, conferences and calls for papers, new course offerings, housing/roommate search postings, join an S-CAR working group, send messages to your professor and fellow students as well as network with those who share your expertise or research interests.
- [Icarcommunity.ning.com](http://Icarcommunity.ning.com)

## MS in Conflict Analysis and Resolution

### Overview

The Master of Science in Conflict Analysis and Resolution is a program that offers a comprehensive study of a wide variety of conflict types and prepares students for research and intervention that can mitigate, resolve, and potentially prevent negative relations between parties. In this program, students analyze the root causes and defining characteristics of conflicts and explore the wide-ranging consequences for those parties engaged and engulfed in hostilities. Conflicts are examined at all levels – interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, and international with the assumption that there are common dynamics across levels of analysis. Much of the analysis centers on discovering common patterns of interaction among various conflict parties and developing models for the evolution of conflicts. However, detailed case studies reveal that each conflict has its unique characteristics and that the actions of the involved parties are somewhat unpredictable.

Along with learning about patterns of conflict and their resolution, students will learn a set of practices that seek to address the sources of hostility, and seek to alter negative patterns of interaction between the parties. A defining characteristic of the MS program is the integration of theory, research and practice. A major lesson practitioners have learned is the centrality of knowledge put into practice—that is, knowing how best to implement such practices with conflict parties in the moment of engagement. Such knowledge reflects acquired skills, practical experience, and awareness of the strengths and weakness of the

different modes of practice.

Conflict analysis and resolution has its origins in a wide range of disciplines, including political science, anthropology, public policy, law, social-psychology, sociology, communications, and religion. The field also has developed its own theories, practices, and research findings, which are reflected in this curriculum.

Graduates of the M.S. program work in a variety of settings where conflict resolution is useful, such as businesses, unions, government agencies, religious groups, court systems, educational institutions, community centers, international relief and development organizations, conflict resolution consulting firms, and in situations where interest groups are in conflict with current and emergent public policy. The Masters of Science also prepares students for doctoral study in both conflict analysis and resolution, as well as related fields.

## Degree Requirements

A total of 42 credit-hour units are required: 15 credits are required core courses, and 27 credits are electives. The choice of electives can vary significantly according to each student's individual goals or needs. Specific electives may not be offered in any given year(s). Therefore, each student should develop a **Plan of Study** that should be discussed once each semester with his/her advisor and updated as appropriate.

Time Limit: GMU requires that all students complete their Masters degrees within six years of their official admission date.

## Required Courses

Students take 15 credits of required course work.

Foundations Courses (6 Credits)

- CONF 600 – Foundations of Conflict Analysis and Resolution Credits: 6 (must be taken in student's first semester)

Conflict Inquiry Courses (3 credits)

- CONF 611 – Conflict Inquiry Credits: 3  
OR

- CONF 660 – Conflict Assessment and Program Evaluation Credits: 3

Conflict Praxis Courses (6 credits)

- CONF 657 – Facilitation Skills Credits: 3
- CONF 625 – Engaging Conflict Credits: 3

## Elective Courses

Students take 27 credits of elective course work.

600 and 700 CONF courses can be taken as electives with the following exceptions,

CONF 650-670 MS students may register for these courses as elective credits after graduate certificate students have had the opportunity to register.

CONF 695, CONF 795, CONF 697, may also apply as electives. These courses can be

repeated for credit as long as the topics are different. Only two (2) directed readings (CONF 697) may be applied towards elective requirements for a masters degree.

Appropriate graduate courses from other GMU departments or Consortium Universities may also apply as electives. Students interested in taking these courses must receive approval from the student's advisor prior to taking the course. The advisor should note their approval of these courses in an e-mail submitted to the MS program director that remains in the students S-CAR file. When considering approval for non-S-CAR courses to be used as electives, advisors will evaluate how the course fits with the student's academic and career goals. With advisor's approval, each student is eligible to include a maximum of 6 credits of electives from outside of the S-CAR program, including courses in other Mason departments, consortium courses, and transfer courses from other universities. Questions can also be sent to the S-CAR director of graduate student services.

**Total Credits required for MS Degree**

**42 credits**

## Plan of Study

Students should work with their advisors to consider how study at S-CAR will help them in their lives and careers. Our students' wide-ranging interests defy a single plan of study. A plan of study shows the courses to be taken in each semester and ensures that students both meet the requirements for their degree and get the benefit of connections between courses. The written MS [Plan of Study](#) should be submitted to the MS program director and student services director and kept in the student's file. Students interested in practice should in consultation with their advisors, identify practice electives and additional opportunities. Students with interest in a particular category of conflict (for example, a region or level of conflict) should participate in relevant working groups and should consider how papers could be constructed in any courses that are relevant to that category. The most skillful students use class papers to build knowledge and materials that will be relevant to future academic and career opportunities.

## Masters Thesis Guidelines

A masters thesis is a written piece of work consisting of research related to the field. A masters thesis is one route to completing a graduate degree and is highly recommend for those interested in careers in academia and research and/or those who are interested in continuing their education to the Ph.D. level. As the thesis is generally a selective study with a specific focus, it affords the student the opportunity to concentrate on an academic area of interest and to conduct meaningful research and inquiry into that area.

The work towards a masters thesis requires the following activities: writing a thesis proposal, gathering and analyzing an extensive body of information, writing drafts of the chapters, and then revising these drafts according to the recommendations of the thesis committee members. The entire process takes approximately one academic year. Establishing a reasonable schedule is very important. We strongly recommend the following steps and sample deadlines listed below.

# Steps to Thesis Preparation

## Step 1: CONF 797- Thesis Proposal

CONF 797- Thesis Proposal (1 Credit)- This course is strongly recommended, but not required, for students planning to complete a thesis. Student can register for CONF 797 the semester before they plan to begin their thesis. This class will assist in beginning the process of researching potential thesis topics, all while receiving feedback from the instructor and fellow students. If you choose not to complete a thesis after registering and completing CONF 797, the 1 credit course will then count towards your elective credits. This course is offered both fall and spring terms.

If you choose not to register for this course, please move to Step 2.

## Step 2: Thesis Committee

### Formation of Committee

The student will ask a faculty member to serve as their chair. We encourage students to review [faculty profiles](#) to get a sense of their areas of expertise and who may be the most appropriate as their committee chair. The student will then ask other faculty to serve as members of the committee in consultation with the chair. The thesis committee chair is primarily responsible for directing and guiding the candidate's research and writing activities. A thesis committee consists of at least three people (including the chair). It is not required for a thesis committee to have an outside reader but if requested, the S-CAR MS Program Director may approve this. The student is responsible for keeping all committee members informed of the scope, plan, and progress of the research as well as the thesis.

Sample Deadlines: The formation of the committee should happen by:

If the student plans to graduate in the spring term: September 15

If the student plans to graduate in the fall term: February 15

If the student plans to graduate in the summer term: November 15

### Registration

CONF 799-Thesis- Before registering for CONF 799 you will need to find a faculty chair for your thesis committee and have some sense of your thesis topic. Students may register for CONF 799 after a S-CAR faculty member has agreed to chair the student's thesis committee. Registration requires a CRN specific to the thesis chair, so students will need to contact their chair or the S-CAR Director of Graduate Student Services for the correct course registration number (CRN). Please note that the CRN will change each term, so you will need to request a new CRN for each term you register for CONF 799 (fall, spring and summer). Patriot Web will use a default registration of 1 credit, but you can click on 1 credit and change it up to 6 credits. It is recommended that a student register for thesis over 2 terms as opposed to registering for all 6 credits in one term. Students must register for at least 3 credits of CONF 799 for the first term of registration. After the first term, students can register for 1-3 credits for the remaining time they use to complete the thesis. Students must register for thesis each semester until they reach the required 6 credits. A student who has not completed his/her thesis after meeting the six hours credit allowed must register for at least 1 hour of thesis (CONF 799) credit each semester until the thesis is completed.

**Students working on their thesis must maintain continuous registration.** A grade of

"IP" will be assigned for CONF 799 courses until the thesis is completed and turned into the GMU Library. For further detail of registration requirements, please consult the [GMU Catalog](#).

### **Human Subjects Review Board**

Students completing a masters thesis must submit a copy of their proposal and all other necessary documents to the Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB), even if the thesis research will not include research on human subjects.

- The HSRB meets monthly to review applications. Monthly submission deadlines are available [here](#)
- Information on human subjects review, templates and forms are available [here](#)

## **Step 3: Submission of First Draft**

The thesis committee needs considerable time to evaluate, advise, and suggest changes to the draft.

Sample Deadlines: The deadline of the first draft due to the chair and committee members is entirely at the discretion of the committee. Again, it is the responsibility of the student to maintain communication with their chair and committee members about the schedule of their thesis and each step of the process.

If a student plans to graduate in the fall term, submission of first draft: October 1.

If a student plans to graduate in the spring term, submission of first draft: March 1.

If a student plans to graduate in the summer term, submission of first draft: June 1.

Once you have a workable draft of your thesis, you should contact the University Thesis Coordinator about completing a format review. You will be unable to graduate without completing a format review with the University Thesis Coordinator.

## **Step 4: Review GMU Thesis Requirements**

Students completing a masters thesis should consult the University Thesis and Dissertation Services (UDTS) Web Site <http://thesis.gmu.edu> regularly to ensure they are meeting the appropriate George Mason University (GMU) requirements. Templates are also available there to ensure proper formatting.

GMU requires strict adherence to the formats described in the online thesis guide. All theses must be reviewed by the UDTS Coordinator prior to final submission. Please make an appointment with the UDTS Coordinator, [udts@gmu.edu](mailto:udts@gmu.edu), to review formatting guidelines as soon as you have a workable draft.

UDTS assists with formatting tables and images in your document and are considered a "fourth committee member". Your document does not need to be finished but should be reviewed by UDTS before your final version is submitted to your committee. The file should be emailed (no hard copies), and you do not have to be present for the review process. We strongly advise you to turn in a copy for review well before the end of the semester deadlines as UDTS reviews all GMU papers. (See UDTS [main page](#) for deadlines). Attend a UDTS workshop. These are held every semester on the Arlington and Fairfax campuses.

## **Step 4: Finalizing Your Thesis**

### **Defense**

Students completing a thesis do not have to publicly “defend” their thesis. However, because your work is very important to the S-CAR community, we do encourage students to present their work in some way. Students can set up a brown-bag presentation to present their research, as well as present at the *S-CAR Celebration of Achievements* each spring. Contact the S-CAR Event Coordinator if you are interested in setting up a date to present your thesis to the community.

### **Submission**

For degree conferral, two copies with cover sheets signed by the entire committee, S-CAR MS Program Director and S-CAR Dean, must be submitted to the GMU Fenwick Library by (generally) 5:00 p.m. on the last Friday of classes in the term in which the student plans to graduate.

Specific deadlines for thesis submission are posted on <http://thesis.gmu.edu>. These deadlines are non-negotiable and are set by the Registrar's office. The student will need to submit:

- GMU Fenwick Library: 2 final copies with cover sheets signed by the entire committee, S-CAR MS Program Director and S-CAR Dean (either 2 100% cotton paper copies or 1 100% cotton paper and 1 e-copy for MARS/ETD).
- S-CAR John Burton Library: 2 final copies with cover sheets signed by the entire committee, S-CAR MS Program Director and S-CAR Dean (regular paper copy, e-copy).

## **S-CAR Thesis Tips**

### **The Earlier the Better**

Many students find themselves in a stressful situation trying to finish all of the thesis requirements in the last minute. Give yourself plenty of time to submit a draft to your committee members to allow them to make recommendations for revising your work. Pay attention to University deadlines for format reviews, making appointments with the UDTS coordinator and final submission deadlines. Consider our recommended deadlines and create a concrete schedule with your committee.

### **Communication is Key**

S-CAR faculty have very different schedules and frequently travel, especially during the summer months. If you are planning on submitting your thesis during the summer, make sure that everyone on your committee is aware and available for draft reviews and signatures. It is up to the student to make sure that they communicate with their committee about important meetings and deadlines. The student is ultimately responsible to obtain all necessary signatures from the committee along with the S-CAR MS Program Director and the S-CAR Dean well before you submit your final copy. Please do not wait until the final week before the thesis deadline to obtain signatures.

### **Pay Attention to Specific Guidelines**

S-CAR does not provide 100% cotton paper for thesis printing and submission. It is up to the student to purchase their own paper and print their own thesis copies.

## Final Submission

When the thesis chair and committee members sign off on a masters thesis, this is the committee's 100% approval of the final product symbolizing that they request no further changes to be made. If a thesis committee requests changes to be made, no members should be signing the signature pages. Once the thesis is submitted to the GMU Library, this is the final document that will be archived and it cannot be returned or edited post library submission.

## Dual MS & MSW Degree Program

### Admission Requirements

Students applying for the Dual MSW and MS program must apply separately to both the MSW and MS (S-CAR) programs. If accepted in both programs, students request permission to pursue the dual degree. See admissions information for both the College of Health and Human Services and the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

### Degree Requirements

Students must successfully complete the following: 86 credits to receive a dual degree.

#### **Social Work Courses 51 credits**

SOCW 623 Human Behavior and Social Systems I	3
SOCW 624 Human Behavior and Social Systems II	3
SOCW 651 Social Policies, Programs, and Services	3
SOCW 652 Influencing Social Policy	3
SOCW 657 Directed Social Work Practice I	3
SOCW 658 Directed Social Work Practice II	3
SOCW 670 Communication and Technology for Social Work Practice	3
SOCW 672 Foundation Field Practicum and Seminar I	3
SOCW 673 Foundation Field Practicum and Seminar II	3
SOCW 684 Social Work and the Law	4
SOCW 685 Organizational Leadership for Social Workers	4
SOCW 687 Empowering Communities for Change	4
SOCW 688 Advanced Research in Social Work	3
SOCW 690 Social Change Field Practicum	6
SOCW 691 Social Change Field Seminar	3

#### **Conflict Analysis & Resolution Courses 35 credits**

CONF 600 Foundations of Conflict Analysis and Resolution	6
CONF 610 Conflict Inquiry	3 or
CONF 660 Conflict Assessment and Program Evaluation	3
CONF 657 Facilitation Skills	3
CONF 625 Engaging Conflict	3
CONF 694 Internship	3

## Dual MS & MA University of Malta Program

Students have the opportunity to pursue a M.S. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University and a M.A. in Conflict Resolution and Mediterranean Security from the University of Malta through an innovative Dual Degree Program. This 13 month program is offered only on site at the University of Malta. Students interested in pursuing the dual degree should apply through University of Malta at [www.um.edu.mt/imp](http://www.um.edu.mt/imp).

## Peace Corps Masters International

The Masters International, a joint program of Mason and the Peace Corps enables participants to prepare for Peace Corps volunteer services while earning an MS in Conflict Analysis and Resolution. Students apply separately to the Peace Corps and to Mason. The 41 credit curriculum provides students with skills and tools to prepare them for work as community development leaders during their Peace Corps Service. An accelerated pathway is provided to allow Peace Corps volunteers to complete 29 credits prior to overseas service (including a summer term), students then receive 6 credits of CONF 694 internship for overseas Peace Corps service. Mason will provide tuition support for the 6 credits of CONF 694 earned overseas. Students then return to Mason for a semester to complete the final 6 credits. Students accepted into the academic program but waiting for notification of acceptance from the Peace Corps may begin their Master's program but will not be eligible for tuition support until they are accepted into the Peace Corps. More information on Masters International Program can be found at [www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm](http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm)

## Transfer to PhD Program

Master's student cannot "transfer" to the Ph.D. program but can apply for admission into S-CAR's PhD program in the regular cycle. If admitted to the PhD program, students must consult with their advisors to determine how courses taken in the MS program will or will not be applied toward the PhD. Students must have completed a master's degree to be admitted to S-CAR's PhD program.

## S-CAR Academic Standards

As part of George Mason University, the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution is obliged to comply with the University's Honor System. Cases referred to the University System are beyond our control. We know that S-CAR's diverse community and interdisciplinary curriculum raise special challenges regarding academic standards. Students and faculty have different expectations, and students can honestly misunderstand what is expected of them. The S-CAR faculty wants all S-CAR students to know and observe the following standards.

**Outside Ideas:** We encourage students to integrate readings, knowledge and experience outside of S-CAR with the academic experience they get in the program. The ideas of others



need not be seen as "in competition with" or "in conflict with" the field of conflict analysis and resolution. However, students should properly cite sources, note disciplinary roots, and acknowledge where ideas conflict or compete.

**Integration within S-CAR-**Similarly, we encourage students integrate ideas from classes. Students should never feel that they have to compartmentalize their thinking to satisfy a particular professor. However, that does not mean that students can substitute the ideas, readings or situations in one class for another. Students should not try to use one theory or model to fit all situations.

**Teamwork.** Students may participate in "study teams" or "learning groups" within classes, and may work together on team projects as directed by faculty. We encourage students to participate in S-CAR working groups to supplement the formal curriculum with practical and topical learning. However, students are expected to disclose any teamwork and may not represent the work of others as their own. Unless otherwise directed in class, students are expected to do original and individual work for each academic assignment.

**Repetition:** During the course of study at S-CAR, students may revisit ideas or cases more than once. Understanding and learning can and should build from class to class. However, we do not allow students to submit the same paper or project (or substantially the same paper or project) to satisfy the requirements of more than one class, unless all teachers concerned give their permission prior to such submissions in advance. Work required in each class should be original and individual unless specifically approved or directed otherwise. Submitting material more than once without disclosure and approval is not permitted. Students who try to use their work more than once may be subject to severe penalties under S-CAR's academic review or under the GMU's Honor Code.

**Plagiarism:** Students may not copy or "borrow" academic material from others without formally citing the source of the material. Paraphrases that closely track an original source should also be properly cited. If uncited, faculty will presume that the ideas presented in a student paper or presentation are his or her own. If the material is found to derive from another source, the student may be charged with plagiarism and subject to penalties under S-CAR's academic standards or GMU's Honor Code. For further discussion of plagiarism see the additional remarks on this subject.

Students who have any question about these standards should consult with the individual instructing faculty or with their advisor.

## **Academic Integrity**

The School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR) strives to exemplify academic integrity as defined within the honor code of George Mason University. George Mason University Students may study the honor code but should understand that plagiarism is strictly forbidden within S-CAR. The Honor Code and other resources related to the subject of academic integrity may be found online at <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu>. Students within the S-CAR community must be responsible for their own work, and must take on the responsibility of dealing with violations of the honor code. In order to maintain academic integrity within S-CAR, students and faculty must report all alleged violations of the Honor Code.

There are a variety of resources available to students for a better understanding of what is considered plagiarism. It is the responsibility of the students to seek out these resources and ask questions if they are unsure of citations, collaborative assignments, or what is considered plagiarism. Ignorance will not be considered an acceptable excuse for plagiarism.

In the spirit of the George Mason University honor code, a student's word is a declaration of good faith acceptable as truth in all academic matters.

## Final Notes

This handbook did not attempt to cover EVERYTHING a student might want to know during their time at S-CAR. For general information about GMU policies and procedures, refer to the applicable Graduate Catalog: <http://catalog.gmu.edu>.

Within the S-CAR web-pages ([scar.gmu.edu](http://scar.gmu.edu)) you will find additional information about:

- the S-CAR faculty and their research interests
- the organizations and program affiliated with S-CAR
- the success of alumni
- informal working groups at S-CAR
- other programs in conflict resolution