

Education and Professional Development Report

June 5, 2020

2019 was an outstanding year for ADRIA's education department. We ran a peak number of courses with strong registration numbers resulting in a year over year increase of 42% in number of students and 32% in total student days. We added regular role-play practice sessions, moved our learner sessions to a new format, and in early 2020 we opened registrations for a new series of public ADR courses. Then, everything shut down.

They say necessity is the mother of invention. Our programs have a strong focus on skill integration; the challenge became how to take what makes our in-person courses successful and transition into an online delivery format. For some courses we are able to transition to a virtual class, that is taking the existing content and using Zoom as the delivery platform; some courses need to be re-designed with a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning; and others are best postponed until in-person classes resume.

We recognize that the demand for online training in this field will extend well beyond this current pandemic. While we are taking a wait and see approach to the in-person classes, we will continue to redesign existing content for online delivery and to create new online learning opportunities.

Some of the highlights since the last AGM/Annual Report

- This past summer we decided to expand our Education team. Jocelyn Christian moved into a new role in Education Special Projects to focus on course development. Naatasha Mohammad was hired in August as the new Education coordinator. She went on maternity leave in December and Sandra Drake moved over from membership to join the Education team for a year.
- This past November we hosted a half-day PD event in both Edmonton and Calgary on Unconscious Bias. There were 30 participants in Edmonton and 32 participants in Calgary. This month we are hosting an online PD event (2-half days) on Restoring the Workplace After a Harassment Investigation and there are 25 participants. We will continue to look for additional Professional Development learning events. If you have any suggestions on topics, please let us know.
- Last fall, we created new Role-play Practice Groups & changed the format of our Learner Sessions.
 - The Role-play Practice Groups are grouped in a series of 3 evening sessions, every second week. The participants sign up for a series of 3 sessions for a total of 6 role-plays. In April, we transitioned these practice groups to an online format with more flexible timing.

- Early in 2020 we transitioned the free learner sessions to an online format. Each session is hosted by an experienced coach/mediator who presents on a topic of interest followed by a group discussion. While these sessions were intended for learner mediators, more experienced mediators are welcome.
- We created a new series of one-day and two-day ADR courses targeted to the public (non-ADR professionals). The Approaching Conflict with Confidence series includes:
 - Understanding Conflict, Managing Conflict, Assertive Expression and Conflict Skills for Bullying Behaviours. These courses were scheduled to run March through May of this year but were cancelled due to physical distancing restrictions. We will assess when it is reasonable to once again offer these courses.
- The National Introductory Arbitration course was offered online at the end of April. This was a “virtual” class via Zoom – synchronous training using existing materials, content and exercises. Several students expressed appreciation at being offered this format as they would have not been able to take an in-person class as they were from areas outside Edmonton and Calgary.
- Students that were enrolled in the National Introductory Mediation course in Edmonton and Calgary this past winter were not able to complete part 2 of the course in-person due to physical distancing restrictions. We were able to offer part 2 online this spring to allow students to complete the course.
- We redesigned our High Conflict Mediation course for online learning. This course includes both synchronous and asynchronous learning and students can register for the 14-hour or 28-hour version. The course begins June 23.
 - Using a trauma informed practice perspective, this course prepares mediators to manage aspects of high conflict mediations, including safety screening, dealing with parties experiencing poor mental health, addictions and substance use issues, strong emotions, and challenging behaviours. Mediators will be equipped with the tools to determine whether to proceed, and if so, to mediate what can be high conflict discussions.
- We have created an online option for the Communications in ADR course. This course will be delivered over six weeks this summer in a combination asynchronous and synchronous learning.
- The next courses we will design/reformat for online learning will be the National Introductory Mediation course and a new course on Mediation Case Development. Once those courses are complete, we will look at our other courses such as Separation and Divorce Mediation (Foundations, Parenting Plans, and Child Support; Spousal Support and Division of Property) to determine if they can be offered online.
- Delivering courses online requires new online tools. Some of the new tools we have created for our online courses are:
 - Zoom tips and online learning guide for students
 - Instructor guide, training and tips for teaching online
 - A guide on how to role-play online
 - And specific course content on our website only accessible to the students enrolled in a particular course
- We have created new policies for Supervised Mock Mediations and Chartered Mediator Assessments to allow for both online and in-person physically distanced options.
- Delivery of online courses and role-plays are more complicated than in-person delivery and it takes a lot more administration. I want to thank Sandra for her help and support in managing the millions of bits and pieces to make online courses work for our students and instructors (and me).
- We are keeping all of our currently scheduled fall in-person classes open for registration. Should we reach sufficient student registrations and no additional distancing requirements are put in place, we

will move forward with the courses and take measures to ensure the 2 meter distancing and other recommendations are in place. Currently we have very low enrollment in all of our in-person classes scheduled. This could be due to lack of confidence regarding safety with in-person classes or tougher financial concerns or both. Our policy is to make a decision on whether a course will proceed no later than one month in advance.

- Typically by this time, I would have already posted the course schedule for early 2021 however I will be holding off for a couple more months before scheduling further in-person classes.
 - Last month, we had webinar on *What is Conflict Management Coaching and How is it Being Used in the DR Field?* Presented by Cinnie Noble. The event was recorded and is available on our website in our blog.
 - We are looking to host more online opportunities for learning and professional development if you have created a webinar or workshop that would of interest to the ADR community, we would like to hear from you. Share your expertise in a specific area. Share some of the tools in your ADR toolbox with others in the field. Provide your perspective on a specific topic.
 - We are also interested in any advanced training targeted to ADR practitioners.
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- For more information on our courses and programs check out the course listings on our website.
 - You can go to the online learning tab on our website to get information on online presentations, workshops, and training offered by ADRIA, our affiliates and partners. Check back often or read our newsletter for the latest updates.
 - And, feel free to reach out to me at any time if you have any questions about our programs our suggestions for Education and Professional Development. I can be reached at Tammy@adralberta.com