

## Organization Systems Renewal (OSR)

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### Degree Offered

Master of Arts in Organization Systems Renewal (MAOSR)

This program is delivered as a cooperative partnership with the nonprofit Organization Systems Renewal Northwest (OSR), which has been engaged in educating leaders of organizational change in the Pacific Northwest since 1979. OSR offered this master's program for 20 years at another local university and joined Seattle University in 2005. This program brings expertise in the design and leadership of organizational and community change, using a systemic approach.

### Master of Arts in Organization Systems Renewal

The Organization Systems Renewal (OSR) program provides the opportunity for students to achieve excellence as designers and leaders of systemic change within their organizations and communities. The curriculum integrates academic knowledge, consultative skill development, practical application, reflective practice, and adaptive leadership. The program design operates on multiple levels, paying equal attention to theory and application. When combined, the curriculum and the program design provide adult learners with opportunities to:

- Design processes and structures for leading and managing systemic change
- Develop holistic and sustainable perspectives about individuals, groups, organizations, and global communities
- Recognize the synergistic qualities and opportunities inherent in living systems
- Develop the heart (courage, love, compassion), skills and integrity to move theory to practical action
- Develop a congruence of personal development and professional practice to help others manage their own transformation and renewal

Core curriculum areas emphasized in the program include organizations, change, leadership, ethics, design, consultative skills, and intercultural perspectives. The curriculum is based on the work of classical and contemporary theorists and practitioners, including Malcolm Knowles, Kurt Lewin, Ron and Gordon Lippitt, Eva Schindler-Rainman, Marvin Weisbord, William Bridges, Chris Argyris, Mary Parker Follett, Donald Schön, Peter Senge, Margaret Wheatley, Fritjof Capra, Ralph Stacey, Jay Forrester, Donella Meadows, Edward Hall, Edgar Schein, Gareth Morgan, William Isaacs, David Orr, Russell Ackoff, Peter Block, Ron Heifetz, and David Cooperrider.

Core faculty (lecturers) support the day-to-day operation of the program and provide hands-on student support. The student core faculty ratio is approximately 10:1, allowing for individualized coaching and mentoring. The program is designed within a 21-month cycle, with students typically in session once a month for three to five days. Session days are scheduled to include weekends and there are two residential sessions during the cycle. In addition to the core faculty, OSR enjoys long-standing relationships with a host of distinguished visiting presenters who are leading thinkers and practitioners in their field. Consistent with adult learning theory, another portion of the OSR curriculum is designed and delivered by the students themselves. Core faculty members serve as mentors for these student-led Design Teams.

## Candidates for Admission

The primary aim of the OSR program is to help students become competent and confident designers and leaders of systemic change, especially within organizations and communities. The program's structure supports study while working full time.

## Admission Requirements

Applicants provide the following for consideration:

- Completed Application for Graduate Admission form and a non-refundable \$55 application fee (waived for Seattle University alumni)
- Evidence of four-year U.S. equivalent bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution
- Minimum of 3.00 grade point average (GPA) calculated with course work from all post-secondary educational institutions attended in the last 90 quarter/60 semester credits of your bachelor's degree and any post-baccalaureate course work. In special cases, those with less than a 3.00 GPA may be admitted on a probationary status. Applicants with a non-graded bachelor's degree must submit official MAT or GRE scores.
- Two recommendations using the OSR forms provided from individuals who are able to assess your qualifications for this program
- OSR admission essay following the guidelines stated in the application packet
- Current résumé
- If English is not the applicant's native language, official English proficiency scores meeting the university's entrance requirements must be submitted. See policy 2008-01 in Admissions Policies for details. Admission through Culture and Language Bridge program is not an option.
- Screened candidates will be invited to interview accompanied by an on-site writing skills exercise

## Degree Requirements

The OSR program requires a total of 68 credits taught through 29 courses over 21 months. All courses are required and must be taken in sequence.

<b>Yr</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Spring</b>
<b>1</b>		OSR 501 OSR 502 OSR 505 OSR 506 OSR 571	OSR 507 OSR 508 OSR 524 OSR 572	OSR 509 OSR 510 OSR 511 OSR 573
<b>2</b>	OSR 581 OSR 596	OSR 512 OSR 515 OSR 517 OSR 574	OSR 516 OSR 519 OSR 575	OSR 520 OSR 521 OSR 523 OSR 576 OSR 582 OSR 595

## Required OSR Courses

OSR 501	Foundations of Organizational Systems, Design, and Renewal.....	4
OSR 502	Individual—Development of the Adult Learner .....	2
OSR 505	Individual—Research Literacy and Methods .....	1
OSR 506	Systems—An Overview of Theory and Perspectives .....	2
OSR 507	Skills—Designing and Leading Participative Meetings.....	3
OSR 508	Design—Principles and Practice.....	2
OSR 509	Organizations—Theory and Culture .....	1
OSR 510	Organizations—Intra and Inter Group Relations .....	2
OSR 511	Change—Theory and Ethical Interventions.....	2
OSR 512	Change—The Theory and Practice of Appreciative Inquiry.....	1
OSR 515	Skills—The Consultative Approach to Change .....	8
OSR 516	Leadership—Bringing Leadership to Organizational Change 2	
OSR 517	Change—Participatory Methods for Designing the Future.....	2
OSR 519	Systems—Living Systems Theory .....	2
OSR 520	Organizations—At Work in the World .....	2
OSR 521	Systems—Dynamics of Social Systems.....	2
OSR 523	Change—Transition, Renewal, and Life-Long Learning .....	2
OSR 524	Leadership—Theory and Personal Mastery.....	2
OSR 571-576	Individual—Learning Reflection and Synthesis (6 courses at 2 credits each).....	12
OSR 581-582	Experiential Design Teams (Design Team I & II; 2 courses at 3 credits each) .....	6
OSR 595	Skills—Organization Systems Renewal Project.....	4
OSR 596	Individual—Theory Paper .....	4
<b>Minimum credits required for degree .....</b>		<b>68</b>

## Organization Systems Renewal Courses

**OSR 501 Foundations of Organizational Systems, Design, and Renewal..... 4**

As the first course in an integrated seven-quarter program, this course introduces the program design and its core competency domains of theory, skill, and personal development. The concept of a learning community is introduced and the community is intentionally formed. Students will apply theory and specific skills through small group and individual work. This course is conducted off-site. Required.

**OSR 502 Individual—Development of the Adult Learner .....**

**2**  
Students identify personal values and vocation/purpose and then integrate this aspirational foundation with their personal and professional goals. They learn strategies for applying theory to understanding the self as system and the self as learner. Students learn about themselves through the use of self-assessments by completing instruments relating to learning styles and strengths. Further, students are introduced to transformational learning and to a personal learning contract as a core design element for their personalization of the OSR program. This course is conducted off-site. Required.

- OSR 505 Individual—Research Literacy and Methods ..... 1**  
 Students will develop an introductory understanding of qualitative and quantitative approaches to applied research. Students are introduced to the theory and practice of action research. This course also will develop foundational research literacy for students, emphasizing the knowledge necessary to locate, read, and assess knowledge claims in information resources such as academic journal articles and books. These introductory skills will enable students to understand what they read and how the theoretical claims of authors fit into the subjects they explore. Further, it will help them to begin conceptualizing how they might conduct research related to their Design Teams, Theory Paper, and OSR Project. Required.
- OSR 506 Systems—An Overview of Theory and Perspectives ..... 2**  
 Students develop an overview of the development and principles of systems theory and systems thinking, understanding the shift from the mechanistic paradigm to one of holism and interrelatedness. Key principles such as context, boundaries, feedback, interdependence, complexity, emergence, and paradox are explored. Students learn how to see systems and collectively comprehend their interactions. Required.
- OSR 507 Skills—Designing and Leading Participative Meetings..... 3**  
 This hands-on application course develops the capacity to design and lead change actions through a participative process. From an application perspective, students will gain hands-on experience and real-time feedback in designing and leading a variety of participative meetings. Students will also learn the theory base and ethics upon which the participative meeting process rests. Course concepts are connected to professional applications. Required.
- OSR 508 Design—Principles and Practice..... 2**  
 Students explore and experience design and design thinking as an intentional co-creating process of being and acting in the world. The design approach invokes creative thinking and encourages innovative action. This is necessary for leading intentional change, where organizational shifts are in sync with the system's larger context. The course provides students the theoretical framework and practical skills essential for helping clients imagine, conceptualize, and implement their preferred future. Creative change is explored in conjunction with the notion of "serving others" in a manner that can facilitate personal and organizational change and renewal. Required.
- OSR 509 Organizations—Theory and Culture ..... 1**  
 Students explore the classical theories of organizations as a way to understand the historical roots of contemporary organizational practices. They become familiar with seminal organizational theorists whose philosophies, values, and practice surface in issues such as change, effectiveness, and participation. Special emphasis is given to organizational culture as a key concept within organizational theory. Required.
- OSR 510 Organizations—Intra and Inter Group Relations ..... 2**  
 This course lays a theoretical and practical foundation in group dynamics, teams, and collaboration. Students gain knowledge, awareness, and skills in working with task, relationship and process issues in groups. The exploration of group development models and intercultural communication theory helps to understand and inform work in small groups. Students also explore the structure and function of teams, including, defining characteristics, when and how to use teams, and characteristics of high performance teams. Successful teaming within or between groups requires an ability to go beyond mere coordination or cooperation to a level of collaboration. Students explore the qualities of this level of engagement and the conditions necessary to bring forth such a relationship. Required.

- OSR 511 Change—Theory and Ethical Interventions..... 2**  
 Students will explore contemporary organizational change models and theories to learn more about their strengths and limitations in creating real and sustainable change in organizations. Students will learn to distinguish between first and second order change and change that is planned and unplanned. Intervention is a “helping” process to intentionally “disturb” the system in order to improve the functioning and performance of the system. Ethical issues will be explored, particularly the importance of ascertaining and working at the appropriate depth of intervention. Required.
- OSR 512 Change—The Theory and Practice of Appreciative Inquiry..... 1**  
 Appreciative Inquiry is a participative and powerful method for creating change in social systems. Rooted in social constructionism and the power of image, it involves a systematic discovery and mobilizing of what gives a social system life in human, ecological, and economic terms. Students will learn the theory and practice of this approach as it represents a major shift in how organizational development practitioners work with organizations. Required.
- OSR 515 Skills—The Consultative Approach to Change ..... 8**  
 Students participate in and deepen their knowledge of the full consultative process: entry, contracting, data collection/interpretation, feedback, recommendations, and implementation. Participating on teams, students work in a real consultative engagement with a client. Teams consult to issues and opportunities specific to the innovation, renewal, health, and wholeness of human systems. Additionally, students explore the role of the self as consultant/helper, learning how personal values, self-awareness, and ethical principles are essential to any consultative relationship. This course is the final in-depth and hands-on opportunity for students to practice their competency in designing and conducting organizational development interventions before they implement their OSR Project. Part of this course is conducted off-site. Required.
- OSR 516 Leadership—Leadership of Systemic Organizational Change..... 2**  
 This course focuses on the practice of adaptive leadership in complex adaptive systems as developed by Ron Heifetz and explores the qualities of leadership and followership needed for a systemic and holistic approach to designing and leading change. Skills focus on discernment of the adaptive challenge facing an organizational system as opposed to technical problems, advancing the purpose of the organization, orchestrating tension in service of systemic change, listening to and communicating the “song beneath the words,” leveraging informal versus formal leadership, differentiating self from roles, being on the dance floor and in the balcony, thinking politically, and giving the work back to the group. Required.
- OSR 517 Change—Participatory Methods for Designing the Future..... 2**  
 Students develop an understanding of “futuring” and how it differs from conventional planning. Exploration of theory, models, and methods associated with futuring helps students understand how to apply this perspective at an organizational and individual level. Emphasis is placed on methods featuring a participatory and whole systems approach. Intercultural considerations are explored. Students will have an opportunity to experience aspects of futuring models and methods as a way to strengthen their application skills. Required.
- OSR 519 Systems—Living Systems Theory ..... 2**  
 This session provides a deeper exploration of living systems theory, one of the main branches of systems theory emphasized in the OSR program. Concepts such as adaptive systems, self-organizing, emergence, complexity, autopoiesis, dissipative structures, and structural coupling are emphasized. Implications for viewing social systems as living systems are explored, particularly in terms of the design and leadership of change. Required.

**OSR 520      Organizations—At Work in the World ..... 2**

After studying change at the individual, group, and organizational level, this course looks at change on the global level. Examples of global change can be found in business, the economy, technology, the environment, and social issues such as poverty, disease, and education. Students explore what it takes to be ethical designers of change in the face of such complex issues. In particular, students gain a working knowledge of the expansive territory of culture. Understanding, and designing for, intercultural differences is essential to the success of working on a global level. Required.

**OSR 521      Systems—Dynamics of Social Systems..... 2**

This course builds on applied systems thinking and explores complexity theory by offering multi-sensory opportunities to see, talk about and work with systems. Rather than viewing change as something that can be planned and controlled, complexity theory tells us that change is unpredictable and uncontrollable. A leader, change agent, or intervener must develop new skills to see how a complex system is trying to emerge into a new whole. Students explore how to design and create the conditions for a social system to self-organize to a new and higher level of functioning by “coming along side” the emerging system to midwife it into this higher state of complexity and functionality. Required.

**OSR 523      Change—Transition, Renewal, and Life-long Learning..... 2**

As the final course in an integrated seven-quarter program, focus is on group endings and managing transitions at the individual level. The learning is highly experiential and personal in that this course includes the adjournment of the learning community. Design considerations for group endings are examined. Students reflect on their OSR journey via their Exit Statement and development a continuance plan for life-long learning. Required.

**OSR 524      Leadership - Theory and Personal Mastery..... 2**

Leadership development is a core skill component and the instrument of systemic organizational change. Students are introduced to the evolution of leadership theory and styles, such as situational, shared, servant, steward, feminine and adaptive leadership through the lens of culture, gender, and systems. Leadership is distinguished from authority and recognized as an action that complements followership; both require courage - following the heart in the face of fear. Thus development of leadership and followership capability is rooted in personal learning, awareness, emotional intelligence, and mastery. Required.

**OSR 571      Individual—Learning Reflection and Synthesis I..... 2****OSR 572      Individual—Learning Reflection and Synthesis II..... 2****OSR 573      Individual—Learning Reflection and Synthesis III..... 2****OSR 574      Individual—Learning Reflection and Synthesis IV ..... 2****OSR 575      Individual—Learning Reflection and Synthesis V..... 2****OSR 576      Individual—Learning Reflection and Synthesis VI..... 2**

Students practice academic and reflective writing as a means of developing professional competence and increasing self-awareness. Reflective inquiry and critical thinking are developed through dialogue methods and writing assignments. Students reflect on their courses, the dynamics of the learning community, progress on their Learning Contract, and their design and facilitation of Degree Committee meetings. Quarterly synthesis papers develop the ability to see themes from the quarter and integrate these themes with prior learning. Large and small group discussions develop dialogue skills. Students take these courses over six quarters building up their capacity for both reflective and critical thinking. Required. Graded CR/F.

<b>OSR 581</b>	<b>Experiential Design Teams I</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>OSR 582</b>	<b>Experiential Design Teams II</b> .....	<b>3</b>
	Design teams present students with real-time learning in group dynamics and collaborative team processes. These team experiences give students an opportunity to develop their design and consultative skills. Students participate in a Design Team during each year of the program. Students receive faculty and student feedback about the effectiveness of overall design, content, and delivery, as well as their individual performance. It is a forum for deepening practice, leadership, and team membership skills, as well as providing an opportunity to experience the paradoxes of group life. Required.	
<b>OSR 591-593</b>	<b>Special Topics</b> .....	<b>1 to 6</b>
<b>OSR 595</b>	<b>Skills—Organization Systems Renewal Project</b> .....	<b>4</b>
	The Organization Systems Renewal (OSR) Project provides consultative design and delivery practice in organizational change for a client outside the OSR system. The OSR Project is conducted under the supervision of the student's faculty advisor and the review of their Degree Committee. The OSR Project provides a vehicle for the student to demonstrate proficiency of OSR program-related core competencies as well as attainment of the student's goals in their Learning Contract. In addition to supporting the student's learning, the Project is designed to contribute to the primary client's real-time organizational needs in an ethical and effective way, within the parameters agreed to by both client and student. Work on the OSR Project generally carries over 2-3 consecutive quarters. An OSR Project requires program advisor sign-off before the student begins work. Required.	
<b>OSR 596</b>	<b>Individual—Theory Paper</b> .....	<b>4</b>
	This course involves a thorough literature review of a theory base related to the student's Learning Contract and professional interests. Based on the review, students write an academic paper summarizing and contrasting the seminal contributors to the field as well as elaborating on the theory. Understanding their theory base deepens the student's knowledge foundation before moving into practicum level application via the OSR Project. Required.	

### **Courses for students admitted prior to Summer 2009 only.**

**See 2008–09 Graduate Bulletin of Information for course descriptions.**

<b>ODVR 509</b>	<b>Organizations—Theory and Culture as a Foundation for Inquiry</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>ODVR 512</b>	<b>Change—The Theory and Practice of Appreciative Inquiry</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>ODVR 515</b>	<b>Skills—The Consultative Approach</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>ODVR 518</b>	<b>Skills—The Consultative Praxis</b> .....	<b>4</b>