

Welcome to OSR

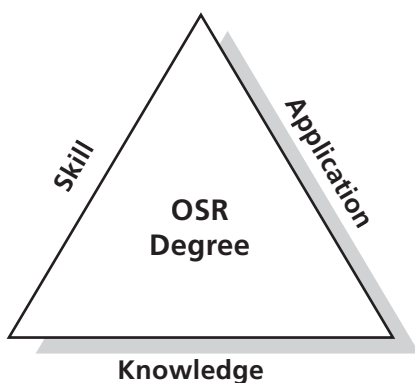
The OSR Program faculty and staff welcome you as a member of the OSR 13 community. We are here to teach, guide, support, challenge and learn with you. The next few pages will provide a brief overview of the OSR Program design. The primary aim of the OSR Program is to provide each student with the opportunity to achieve excellence as a designer and leader of change, with particular emphasis on change within organizations and communities.

OSR emphasizes practical action based on solid theory. The program combines academic knowledge, skill development, and application. Integration of theory and practice will occur as you continually reflect on and apply your learning.

Knowledge. Through the knowledge component of OSR, students build a theoretical and conceptual foundation for organization systems renewal work. The knowledge component of the curriculum focuses on the growing body of organizational and systems theories and their potential application to organizational work. Major topics include: Living Systems, Design, Teaming and Collaboration, Organizational Inquiry, Intervention, Ethics, System Dynamics, Multicultural Perspectives, Leadership, Global Perspectives and Sustainability, and Personal/Professional Renewal.

Skill. The skill component of OSR challenges students to develop and demonstrate the skills needed to be effective leaders of change. Students build their academic and behavioral competence through participating in class sessions, completing program assignments, and contracting for feedback with classmates, advisors and degree committee members. Topics include: Exploration and planning of personal and work goals, communication, team development and group dynamics, consulting skills and praxis, and designing and leading participative meetings.

Application. In the application component of OSR, students demonstrate competence as practitioners in client settings. Students will participate in two Design Teams during the 22 months of the program. These student-lead teams design and deliver a learning day for the cohort (the *internal* client) on one of the OSR curriculum areas. In the sixth quarter of the program, students design and deliver a Consultation Project for an *external* client.



This handbook will help you understand the various stages – and expectations – of the OSR Program. You should find it to be a valuable resource. As you work your way through the handbook, you will see the following icons:



Cross-Reference



Schedules & Deadlines



OSR Degree Process



Documentation



Hints & Reminders



OSR Program specific terms are capitalized throughout this Student Handbook.

OSR Program Intention

It is the intention of the OSR Program to provide adult learners with opportunities to:

- Design processes and structures for leading and managing change
- Develop wholistic perspectives about individuals, groups, organizations and the world 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 congruence of body, heart, mind, spirit and professional practice to help individuals, groups, organizations and communities manage their own transformation and renewal

Core Values of the OSR Program

- We promote teaching and learning that is student-centered and engages the whole person.
- We create and nurture a learning community.
- We operate collaboratively and engage in co-learning with students, colleagues, and partners.
- We practice inquiry and critical thinking, and avoid an expert model of teaching or consulting.
- We model systemic thinking and a designer's perspective.
- We foster an innovative and entrepreneurial spirit.
- We are honest and open with students, colleagues, and partners.

Background

The Organization Systems Renewal (OSR) program, established in 1979, is the only one of its kind in the country. The program provides the opportunity for students to achieve excellence as designers and leaders of change within organizations and communities. The roots of the OSR program are rich and deep. The program was founded by Don Swartz with the help of pioneers in the field of whole systems approaches to organizational change, including Gordon Lippitt, Ronald Lippitt, Eva Schindler-Rainman, Oscar Mink, and Virginia Satir.

Program Design Highlights

The OSR Program reflects a non-traditional approach to education, including the following design elements:

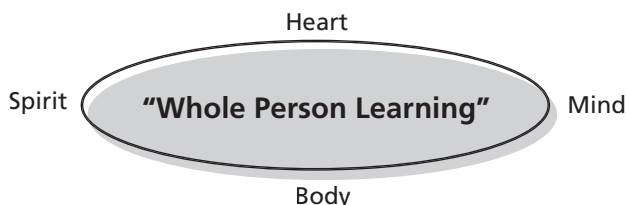
A Learning Community. OSR 13 is a community of co-learners composed of students, core faculty, guest faculty, staff and field advisors. OSR 13 is also part of a larger OSR community including alumni from previous cohorts. With each new class, the learning community grows.

Cohort Model. OSR is based on a “cohort” model of education. You will travel through the entire degree program with the same group of roughly 40 students. After seven consecutive quarters of full-time enrollment, you will graduate together.

Learning by Doing. OSR emphasizes application of learning. You will develop and teach course content as a member of two Design Teams. You will also apply your learning in a Consultation Project and in ongoing personal and professional life.

Experienced Professional Peers. Most OSR students come into the program with significant prior work experience. Many OSR students will continue to work full-time while completing the program. This enriches the cohort’s learning by providing organizational contexts in which to apply OSR concepts.

Student-Centered, Whole Person Learning. The OSR program is learner-centered. This gives you the freedom — and responsibility — to tailor your degree program to achieve your unique academic goals, address your learning style and meet program requirements. OSR also models a “whole person” approach to education by engaging not only your mind, but also your body, spirit and heart in the learning process.



Assumptions about Adult Learners

- *Adults are motivated by interests and needs that learning will satisfy*
- *Adults are oriented to learning that is relevant to life situations*
- *Experience is a rich source of learning for adults*
- *Adults need to be self-directing*
- *Adults want to be respected for their knowledge and life experience*

—Based on the work of Malcom Knowles



*See Chapter 2:
Learning Contract*

*See Chapter 3:
Design Teams*

*See Chapter 4:
Degree Committee*



As a courtesy, remember to schedule meetings with your Faculty Advisor and Field Advisors well in advance.

OSR Structures that Support Learning

The OSR Program balances a learner-centered, self-directed philosophy with structures that frame each student's Degree Process and create environments that facilitate learning. These include:

- Academic Advising
- Collaborative Learning Groups (CLGs)
- The Learning Contract
- Design Teams
- Degree Committees

The following sections describe the function of academic advising and Collaborative Learning Groups (CLGs) in more detail. The Learning Contract, Design Teams, and Degree Committees are described in subsequent sections of the handbook.

Academic Advising

Faculty Advisor's Role

One member of the faculty will be your advisor. Your faculty advisor has the authority and responsibility to ensure that you are making appropriate progress and meeting OSR program requirements. Your advisor will also assist you in developing and refining your personal Learning Goals and strategies. This is accomplished by:

- Helping you clarify OSR program and Seattle University requirements
- Supporting the development of your Learning Contract and the formation of your Degree Committee
- Coaching and mentoring to facilitate academic learning and professional/personal development
- Meeting with you in formal advising sessions (scheduled in advance)
- Approving Field Advisor members of your Degree Committee
- Participating fully in your Degree Committee meetings
- Reviewing required documentation for quality and completeness
- Determining whether your learning meets graduate-level standards

- Communicating any concerns about your progress
- Ensuring that Seattle University standards and requirements are met and that established procedures are followed
- Signing all official documents

Collaborative Learning Groups

What are CLGs?

The OSR 13 cohort is divided into sections known as Collaborative Learning Groups. Time is set aside during each monthly session for CLG activities. While each CLG develops a unique “personality,” a shared purpose and expectations create a common foundation.

Purpose

CLGs provide participants with an ongoing small group to support one another in their learning for the duration of the program. This group creates an environment of mutual support that allows students to:

- Clarify Degree Process questions and expectations
- Increase understanding of OSR concepts through small group discussions and sharing of individual work
- Explore new insights, practice listening, and gain feedback in an environment where it is “safe” to take risks
- Gain a deeper understanding of group dynamics through direct experience

Expectations

Individuals within a CLG can contribute greatly to each other’s learning. For this to occur, each member is expected to:

- Contribute to a climate of openness, trust, honesty, confidentiality, civility, risk-taking and support
- Contract to give and receive feedback with other CLG members
- Participate fully in group processes: Communicating clearly, making decisions, resolving differences and fulfilling assigned group tasks
- Share responsibility for facilitation and make the best possible use of limited group time

CLG Assignments

Each CLG includes one-quarter of the cohort and a faculty advisor. CLG sections are numbered alphabetically according to the Faculty Advisor’s last name:

Koenig: CLG #1

Robinson: CLG #2

Schindler: CLG #3

White: CLG #4



Four ways learning evolves in the Degree Process:

- *Cohort's curriculum brings content **breadth***
- *Design Teams ensure content **depth***
- *Learning Contract provides **focus***
- *Consultation Project builds **skills***

The OSR Degree Process

The OSR Degree Process is structured to facilitate intentional, individualized learning through academic content, self-directed study, practical experience and engagement with your faculty advisor, peers and a Degree Committee you select.

Design Intentions of the Degree Process

The Degree Process is designed to help you lay a solid foundation for applied learning as you journey toward your personal and professional goals. Through the OSR Degree Process, you will demonstrate an **ability to think and act systemically and wholistically, while grounded in practical and responsible action**. You will also demonstrate your ability to design and create systems that serve human needs and desires, and facilitate appropriate change in existing systems. Specific intentions of the Degree Process ask students to:

- Create an environment that will challenge and foster your own creative process
- Become more aware and intentional about how you think and act
- Understand, refine and act on your own creative process, and use that creativity in designing your degree program
- Gain knowledge and experience as a systemic designer, facilitator and leader, and reflect learnings about these roles in the way you meet degree process requirements
- Develop the ability to reflect on and evaluate your design and its outcomes
- Engage in synthesis of the whole learning experience

Program Requirements

- Determine an Area of Focus as a basis for your Learning Contract; develop and complete the terms of your Learning Contract
- Form and engage with a Degree Committee approved by your Faculty Advisor
- Fully engage in the activities of your Collaborative Learning Group (CLG), Design Teams and Cohort
- Complete the requirements and documentation of the key milestones of the Degree Process outlined in this handbook

Key milestones include:

- Planning, researching, and writing a Theory Paper
 - Planning and implementing a Consultation Project
 - Participating in, and reflecting upon, all residential and class sessions
- Write monthly Course Papers documenting learning through out the OSR experience
 - Write Quarterly Synthesis Papers to integrate your learning over a span of time
 - Earn 64 quarter credits in 7 consecutive quarters of full-time enrollment

To graduate from OSR you must meet all of these requirements.

OSR Policies

Enrollment and Attendance

Participation in the OSR Program requires seven quarters of continuous enrollment. Students, faculty and staff in OSR 13 will be subject to all policies, procedures and guidelines of Seattle University and of the College of Arts and Sciences. SU's policies are available online at

http://www.seattleu.edu/home/learning_teaching/bulletins_of_information/graduate/pdf/Grad_Bulletin.pdf

OSR students are expected to become familiar with all SU policies.

Students will not be allowed to continue in the OSR 13 cohort if they miss more than two weekend sessions or more than one residential session during the seven-quarter duration of the program, without approval of Michael Bisesi, Director of the Executive Master of Not-For-Profit Leadership Program. If a student is unable to continue in the cohort for other than academic reasons, the student may apply to transfer to other programs within Seattle University. Please note that other SU graduate programs may accept all, some, or none of OSR credit toward fulfillment of requirements, and may or may not admit OSR students as transfers into their programs.

Should a student be unable to attend a session for any reason, the student will be responsible for proceeding as follows:

1. Notify faculty advisor.
2. Give the reason for non-attendance if at all possible. (Other team members will want to know. They care.)
3. Arrange with another student to be responsible for taking notes, collecting materials and briefing about the missed session.
4. Arrange with advisor to make up any learning experience or work missed. Contract for comparable learning activity for which the student is registered, fulfilling learning intentions, acquiring learning content, and documenting learning, all of which are required for award of credit.

Attendance is Important! OSR's successful learning design depends on full and continuing collaborative participation of all team members. Missed class sessions are difficult to "make up."

Writing at a Graduate School Level

If writing skills at the master's level appear to be insufficient, the student may be asked by their Faculty Advisor to work with Seattle University's Writing Center to improve their academic writing. More information about the Writing Center is available at

<http://www.seattleu.edu/academics/wrctr/>