



School of Public Policy



Organization Development and Knowledge Management

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Dynamic. Rigorous. Respected. These are dominant characteristics of the Mason School of Public Policy, where students develop the skills to achieve and lead in their chosen professional fields and help change the world. ♦ The School of Public Policy is fully engaged in real-time research, dialogue, and problem solving with policymakers at the global, federal, state, regional, and local levels. Our faculty includes leading scholars and practitioners with expertise in such areas as cross-cultural communication, organizational consulting, and appreciative intelligence. Our students emerge from the school with a comprehensive skill set sought by employers in government and the private and nonprofit sectors. ♦ The school supports a full complement of disciplines, offering six different master's degrees and the nation's largest PhD program. It provides myriad opportunities for hands-on research. All of this is located at our convenient campus in Arlington, Virginia, on Metro's Orange Line, just a 15-minute ride from the White House. ♦ At the Mason School of Public Policy, the combination of access and acumen gives you a unique opportunity to make your mark on the world. Think big.

FACULTY WORK HELPS ORGANIZATIONS REFRAME, INNOVATE, PROFIT

It's no secret that businesses and other large organizations are often slow to change, even when their very existence depends on it. The faculty of the School of Public Policy's Organization Development and Knowledge Management (ODKM) master's degree is dedicated to helping organizations find ways to adapt and change.

For example, Professor Tojo Thatchenkery's book on his theory of "appreciative intelligence" has become a must-read for entrepreneurs and leaders of business, governments, and nonprofit organizations.

The premise is deceptively simple: even the hardest challenges can be overcome by reframing the situation to emphasize the positives in a way that anticipates what the future may hold. In the book that made it to the *Harvard Business Review's* Reading List, he writes: "Appreciative Intelligence is the ability to see the mighty oak in the acorn. Metaphorically, it is the ability to see more than the present existence of a

small capped nut. It is the capacity to see a strong trunk and countless leaves as emerging from the nut as time unfolds."

Other faculty in the program are having a similar impact. Ann Baker is a leading scholar who researches how organizations can become more productive by jettisoning archaic hierarchal models in favor of a collaborative structure that emphasizes conversational approaches to learning and knowledge. Her work helped the U.S. Postal Service's Office of Inspector General to overhaul its workplace in ways that help employees strike a work-life balance to reduce workplace conflicts, improve solidarity, and boost productivity.

Professor Mark Addleson has broadened the program's mission to focus on organizational coaches, or people who help large organizations shed 19th-century organizational models.

"My main interest, both from a theoretical and practical perspective, is our changing world and how to bring about deep and lasting change in the way we organize, to enable organizations to meet the challenges of 21st-century values and problems," he says.



Tojo Thatchenkery and Jessica Heineman-Pieper are part of a cutting-edge faculty whose research is helping organizations of all types adapt their workplace models for 21st-century success. The faculty are also dedicated teachers, instructing a cadre of students who graduate with skills that are in high demand by companies, federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations that want to work smarter and more efficiently.



GRADUATES IN HIGH DEMAND AS ORGANIZATIONS CHANGE THE WAY THEY DO BUSINESS

In a world where traditional hierarchal business models are becoming obsolete, professionals who can guide organizations as they reorganize into more modern work environments are in high demand. That's where graduates of the School of Public Policy's Organization Development and Knowledge Management program have a competitive edge.

Penny Potter says she began applying classroom concepts as a consultant to the federal Millennium Challenge Corporation even before she graduated in 2008, a point she says underscores the unique focus of the program.

"I am able to see more of what is going on in the organizations that I consult with," says Potter, an entrepreneur who runs her own consulting business, providing leadership coaching to senior-level executives in Washington, D.C. agencies.

Students work closely together in cohorts, forging lasting bonds and professional contacts as they train collaboratively to help businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies

transition into 21st-century methods of operation.

Most students in the program already have full-time careers and families and the curriculum is designed to accommodate their schedule. Classes are held on alternating Friday nights and Saturdays.

Ray Pagliarini, a 2005 graduate, credits his degree for helping him land a senior-level job at the Department of Justice.

"This is my dream opportunity," says Pagliarini, who was named an adviser and consultant to the deputy assistant attorney general for Human Resources and Administration, where he helps formulate departmental policies, procedures, and regulations relating to human resources.

For Patrick Meskell, executive vice president of operations and a board member of the Silver Diner chain of restaurants, the result of the program was more personal.

"The ODKM program provided me with a wonderful, stimulating, collaborative, and challenging space to explore and discover new insights and understandings about myself as a person and leader," Meskell says.

Many complex organizations are stuck in archaic models that emphasize hierarchy and rigidity over more dynamic ways of thinking that use a collaborative and conversational approach to reduce conflicts and increase productivity. The program produces graduates prepared to counsel these companies, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations on how to implement reforms.



Artist rendering of Founder's Hall, the new home of the School of Public Policy, scheduled to open in late 2010.

ADMISSIONS

For information about application requirements and admissions deadlines, to request an information packet, or to download an application, please visit our web site at

policy.gmu.edu/admissions

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