

M.A. in Organizational Leadership

Design the Future that the Past says is impossible

Description of Learning Experiences

Revised 2017

Learning in the MAOL occurs through 3 types of experience: Inquiry, Practice, and Application. Together, these three approaches provide an integrative approach to exploring, embodying, and expressing your unique expression of Leadership. Note that Learning Experiences are not discreet courses but rather a way for prospective students to understand what they will experience in the program. Descriptions of the courses themselves are available by sending a request to [HERE](#)

MAOL Inquiry-based Learning Experiences

Inquiry-based classroom experiences are designed to provide frameworks and tools that, together, invite a significantly deeper relationship with: Leadership/Management, Organization, the Self, the Other, and Change. This mode of learning provides the student with perspectives from which it is possible to go to work on creating Futures that are a break from the Past. Inquiry-based Learning Experiences in the MAOL include:

Language and Nonphysical Reality

What is the basis of occurring reality – reality as it occurs to an individual – and what are the tools and frameworks for creating change both within an occurring reality and on that reality itself?

Organizational Expressions: Leading, Managing, Developing

Organization is primarily a language-based phenomenon and there are three forms of expression that emerge from all organizational systems.

Personal Effectiveness

What is the nature of self, both as a fixed phenomenon grounded in one's psychology, and a generated phenomenon arising from one's engagement with speaking and listening? How does one explore and transcend one's own habitual psychological patterns?

Interpersonal Effectiveness

What is the nature of trust, relationship, influence, and interdependence?

Change Management versus Change Leadership

How do we relate to Change in a system?

Systems Thinking

How do complex-adaptive systems actually operate? How do we think about systems that are organic and human versus rigid and machine-like?

MAOL Practice-based Learning Experiences

Practice-based Experiences are designed to provide the learner with a core set of daily / weekly practices that provide an integrative approach to living a life of Leadership. Practice-based Learning Experiences in the MAOL include:

Listening and Speaking

Experiential engagement with a set of practices to cultivate deep listening for self, other, and world. Establishes the basis for personal and interpersonal engagement for the cohort.

Mindfulness

Simple, accessible practices for developing and maintaining a mindfulness practice. Serves as a context for journaling exercises / homework for a several courses.

Movement

Experiential engagement with and training on one to two movement practices (e.g., Qigong, Tai Chi, and Yoga).

Nutrition

Experiential understanding of the impact of food/beverage intake on one's psychological and physical state. Establishes connection to physiological manifestations of the three systems expressions (Managing, Leading, Developing).

Storytelling

Experiential engagement with the craft of storytelling as a powerful leadership practice. Serves as a context for journaling exercises / homework for several courses.

Visual Art

Experiential engagement with self-expression and storytelling through visual media (primarily photography and digital painting). Serves as a context for journaling exercises / homework for several courses.

MAOL Application-based Learning Experiences

Application-based experiences are designed to provide students with the opportunity to apply what they are learning about their Leadership to real-world contexts. These experiences are essentially projects that are completed outside of the classroom, with class time being devoted to examining the impact of their work, receiving feedback and coaching on their progress, and engaging with faculty in just-in-time skill building on emerging issues & opportunities in their projects. Application-based Learning Experiences in the MAOL include:

Facilitation of groups for each of the 3 Organizational Expressions

Project-based engagement with learning the art, craft, and science of holding interpersonal and group space that facilitates the emergence of each of the three organizational expressions (Managing, Leading, Developing).

Human-centered Design Project

Project-based engagement with the discipline of Human-centered Design and application of this discipline to a 3-month initiative in learner's workplace, community, etc.

Breakthrough Project

Degree-long project that applies all aspects of the curriculum to create a Breakthrough – a result in the world that was not possible when the learner started the program. The culminating experience is an opportunity to apply classroom theory as action-based research and development. Integrated with the mentorship experience, the culminating or “breakthrough” project is an opportunity to receive on-the-job coaching from the Organizational Leadership faculty. Students are encouraged to begin applying leadership skills, such as testing, speculation, piloting, managing, leading, and developing, within their organizations. Students gain a real, in-depth understanding of the principles of generative leadership through applied practice, a comprehensive written report, and an oral presentation of their culminating project.