ODKM 600 – Foundations of Organization Development and Knowledge Management

SYLLABUS

Fall 2025

Schar School of Policy and Government
Room 210, Van Metre Hall and/or Virtual (Zoom)
3351 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22201

Instructor
John Hovell
PMP, CKM, ODCP, GPO
(Project Management Professional, Certified Knowledge Manager, Organization Development Certified Practitioner, Gestalt Practitioner in Organizations)

Email: jhovell@gmu.edu

Office: TBD

Course Materials: Miro and Canvas

Office Hours: Fridays 3-4pm ET and/or by appointment anytime

Class Overview
This introduction to Organization Development (OD) and to Knowledge Management (KM) will provide a historical review and a contemporary understanding of interventions in these fields of study with an intent to stimulate students to be creative and original in developing their own flagship approaches. Conventional approaches that have their roots in the industrial age will be explored alongside contemporary ones. The course will expose participants to scholarly and practitioner models inspired by a multicultural orientation that combines knowledge and wisdom.

Learning Process and Intended Outcomes
This course is a learner-centered approach where you assume responsibility for your learning. Participation is necessary and desired, even with consideration for silence and reflection as a way of participating. Explorations of the subject matter in this course may generate ambiguity, discomfort, and more questions than answers. Reduction of ambiguity and uncertainty is a social process most often progressed through conversation and application. When it comes to the fundaments of OD and KM, our sessions together are a place to generate and explore those conversations and applications. This is an opportunity

for you to be innovative, curious, and bold about create actionable knowledge of OD and KM.

The intended learning outcomes for this course are:
- Broadened and deepened understanding of OD and KM
- Personal and professional development especially "use of self"
- Application of KM and OD to your current challenges and projects

Class Schedule

Date	Day	Location	Time
August 27	Wednesday	Virtual (Zoom)	7pm - 9pm ET
October 17	Friday	Zoom	5pm - 10pm ET
October 18	Saturday	In-person	9am - 6pm ET
October 31	Friday	Zoom	5pm - 10pm ET
November 1	Saturday	In-person	9am - 6pm ET
November 14	Friday	Zoom	5pm - 10pm ET
December 6	Saturday	In-person	9am - 6pm ET

School and Class-Specific Policies

Accommodations

If you are a student in need of any accommodations, please mention this to John Hovell, and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC. Please first visit http://ds.gmu.edu for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu and/or phone: (703) 993-2474

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus, any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of education. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics. Plagiarism is the use of others' words or ideas presented as one's own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of others' work or derived from artificial intelligence-enabled tools such as ChatGPT. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources are essential while writing your assignments. The faculty of the Schar School has adopted a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of "F" and may lead to failure for the course.

More information is available in the Academic Standards Code.

Attendance Policy

You are required to attend each class session to receive credit for this class. There is a program-wide policy that students are not allowed to miss more than one class and still get passing credit for the course. If you miss more than one class, you will not receive credit for the course. If you are late, you will lose points toward class attendance. If you leave and do

not return during the class session, you will lose points toward class attendance. If a repeated attendance issue is observed, the ODKM program director will be notified.

Active Presence/Participation

Active listening and engagement in session activities is expected at all times. Active engagement is significantly enhanced when students have done the necessary preparation (readings in particular). Finally, the Group Project requires your full engagement as a member of a team. Be a valuable contributor to the Team. Keep in mind that active listening and engagement doesn't mean you have to be speaking, it is very possible to be actively listening and engaging through silence, processing, integration, and reflection. The intent is to be fully present and minimize non-class-related activities.

Names and Pronouns

If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with me and indicate how best to address you in class and via any written communications such as email. I use he/his for myself and you may address me as "John", "Professor Hovell" or "Mr. Hovell" in written communications and verbally. Furthermore, Mason supports and recognizes that an inclusive and welcoming community is linked to our strategic goals and is key to building a sense of belonging and well-being. For this reason, students may use the tools we provide to change their names and pronouns on Mason records here.

Campus Closure or Emergency Class Cancelation

If the campus closes, or if a class meeting needs to be canceled or adjusted due to weather or other concern, students should check Canvas for updates on how to continue learning and for information about any changes to events or assignments.

Intended Learning Objectives

This class is intended to offer possibilities for your fundamental development in the fields of OD and KM. These fundamentals can be applied internal or external to organizations and will greatly vary upon situation and organizational need. All conversations and activities will emphasize practical applications and real-world scenarios, mostly helpfully raised and explored by learners themselves.

More specifically, learners will:

- Develop an internal understanding of OD and KM
- Create and mature a KM strategy by exploring real-world scenarios
- Practice OD and KM techniques such as Knowledge Retention, Communities of Practice, Knowledge Cafés, Appreciative Inquiry, and many more
- Discuss and apply KM and OD fundamentals to their current needs
- Experience the often impactful experiential learning workshops of the KM Strategic Planning Canvas, the Organization Workshop, When Cultures Meet, and the Client Exercise

Course Syllabi

Session 1, August 27th, 7-9pm ET
- Required Preparation
  - Read Stan Garfield's perspective regarding "[What is the use of KM?](#)"
  - Read the 3 main pages on Mee Yan Cheung-Judge's [OD App website](#) (namely the homepage, competencies, and specialisms – all listed in the top navigation)
  - Be prepared to share your rationale for *why* you and your organization need ODKM
- Session Exercises
  - Check-in
  - Why practice KM and OD?
  - Check-out
- Required Homework
  - Session Feedback Template

Session 2, October 17th, 5-10pm ET
- Required Preparation
  - Read and/or watch Nancy Dixon's "[The Three Eras of KM](#)"
  - Read Nirmala Palaniappan's perspective on "[Types of KM Strategies](#)"
  - Read Organization Development Network's (ODN) perspective on "[What is OD?](#)"
  - Be prepared to ask questions and discuss definitions of OD and KM, especially as they apply in your context
- Session Exercises
  - What is KM?
  - History of KM
  - KM Strategy
  - What is OD?
  - History of OD
- Required Homework
  - Session Feedback Template

Session 3, October 18th, 9am-6pm ET
- Required Preparation
  - Read Ed Schein, Gervase Bushe and Bob Marshak's perspective on "[What is Dialogic OD](#)"
  - Read Harold Jache's perspective on the [Seek Sense Share framework](#) as a core framework for Personal Knowledge Management
  - Come prepared to talk about a specific challenge you have (where OD or KM might be directly applicable)
- Session Exercises

- Diagnostic OD
- Dialogic OD
- Dynamic OD
- Personal KM
- Project-based KM
- Organizational Learning, Collective Intelligence
- KM Techniques (ONA, Dialogue Mapping, Expertise Location, etc.)
  - Required Homework
    - Session Feedback Template

Session 4, October 31st, 5-10pm ET
- Required Preparation
  - Read this peer-reviewed research in the KM4Dev Journal regarding Knowledge Retention Framework and Knowledge Retention Maturity Model
  - Read David Gurteen's perspective on "What is a Knowledge Café?"
  - Come prepared to offer 15 minutes of content for a Knowledge Café
- Session Exercises
  - Knowledge Retention
  - Knowledge Café
  - Communities of Practice
  - Use of Self
- Required Homework
  - Session Feedback Template

Session 5, November 1st, 9am-6pm ET
- Required Preparation
  - Read Juanita Brown's World Café History
  - Read Sandra Janoff's "What is Future Search?"
  - Read David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivasta's Appreciative Inquiry
  - Read Patricia Eng's "To ISO KM or not"
  - Come prepared to "think and bridge across disciplines" discussing how ODKM relates to many other disciplines such as Diversity Equity Inclusion, Change Management, Project Management, etc.
- Session Exercises
  - Large Group Interventions (Open Space, Appreciative Inquiry, etc.)
  - ODKM Partner Disciplines (Diversity Equity Inclusion, Change Management, etc.)
  - KM Technology
  - KM Measurement
  - KM Maturity Models
  - Overcoming barriers to KM
- Required Homework
  - Session Feedback Template

Session 6, November 14th, 5-10pm ET
- Required Preparation

- o Read and watch Patrick Lambe's "Conducting a KM Planning Exercise"
- o Read and watch the Organization Workshop
- o Come prepared to think through your organization's KM strategy including organizational KM challenges, culture, and solutions
- Session Exercises
  - o KM Strategic Planning Canvas
  - o Oshry's Organization Workshop
- Required Homework
  - o Course Evaluation
  - o Session Feedback Template

Session 7, December 6th, 9am-6pm ET
- Preparation
  - o Read and watch When Cultures Meet
  - o Come prepared to practice and apply everything we've studied, discussed and practice in a real-time real-client exercise
- Session Exercises
  - o Oshry's When Cultures Meet
  - o The Client Exercise
  - o Appreciation Circle and Feedback Forms
- Required Homework
  - o Session Feedback Template

Course Requirements, Grading, and Evaluation

The grade in this course is based upon the following rubric, 100 total points:

- 25 points for attendance and contributions
- 50 points for documented reflections and feedback after each class
- 25 points for the Client Project in the final session of class

Grading will occur as follows:

- Client Project: Feedback from the client in the final session of class
- Feedback: Create your own template and share via Canvas after each class by the following Wednesday night, 2 points off per missed week (these will all be listed as "assignments" in Canvas as reminders for you). Clarifications will be offered in Canvas to help you design and complete your template.

The following scale will be used to determine your grade out of a total of 100 points.

- 98-100 = A+
- 93 –97.99 = A
- 90 - 92.99 = A
- 86 - 89.99 = B+
- 83 - 85.99 = B

- 80- 82.99 = B
- 70 - 79.99 = C

Below 69.99 = F

Required Readings (by session)

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  - Read Harold Jache's perspective on the Seek Sense Share framework as a core framework for Personal Knowledge Management

- o Come prepared to talk about a specific challenge you have (where OD or KM might be directly applicable)
- Session Exercises
  - o Diagnostic OD
  - o Dialogic OD
  - o Dynamic OD
  - o Personal KM
  - o Project-based KM
  - o Organizational Learning, Collective Intelligence
  - o KM Techniques (ONA, Dialogue Mapping, Expertise Location, etc.)
- Required Homework
  - o Session Feedback Template

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- Required Preparation
  - o Read this peer-reviewed research in the KM4Dev Journal regarding Knowledge Retention Framework and Knowledge Retention Maturity Model
  - o Read David Gurteen's perspective on "What is a Knowledge Café?"
  - o Come prepared to offer 15 minutes of content for a Knowledge Café
- Session Exercises
  - o Knowledge Retention
  - o Knowledge Café
  - o Communities of Practice
  - o Use of Self
- Required Homework
  - o Session Feedback Template

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- Required Preparation
  - o Read Juanita Brown's World Café History
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  - o KM Technology
  - o KM Measurement
  - o KM Maturity Models
  - o Overcoming barriers to KM
- Required Homework

- o Session Feedback Template

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- Required Preparation
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- Session Exercises
  - o KM Strategic Planning Canvas
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- Required Homework
  - o Course Evaluation
  - o Session Feedback Template

Session 7, December 6th, 9am-6pm ET
- Preparation
  - o Read and watch When Cultures Meet

Recommended Readings
- Davenport, T. & Prusak, L. (2000) *Working Knowledge: How Organizations Manage What They Know*. 2nd edition, Harvard Business Review press.
- Garfield, S. (2006). *Implementing a Successful Knowledge Management Program*. Ark Group.
- Garfield, S. (2017). *Proven Practices for Promoting a Knowledge Management Program*. Lucidea Press.
- Wenger, E. & McDermott, R & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Harvard Business School Press.
- "The OD App" website and journey by Dr. Mee Yan Cheung-Judge
- Kemboi, G. (2021). *Case Study: Hunger for knowledge on sustainable development and food security systems in Africa*. RealKM Magazine.
- Stan Garfield's KM blog
- KM4Dev Community of Practice
- SIKM KM Community of Practice
- World Bank Communities of Practice Toolkit
- UNICEF Knowledge Exchange Toolbox
- Global Use of Self Research Report
- Conversational Leadership website
- Harold Jarche Perpetual Beta blog
- ISO 30401, International Standard for Knowledge Management Systems
- Jones, B. & Brazzel, M. (2014) *The NTL Handbook of Organization Development and Change: Principles, Practices, and Perspectives*. Wiley.
- Cheung-Judge, M. & Holbeche, L. (2021) *Organization Development: A Practitioner's Guide for OD and HR*. 3rd edition, Kogan Page.

- Hovell, J. (2022) *Creating Conversational Leadership: Expanding and Combining Knowledge Management, Organization Development and Diversity and Inclusion*. De Gruyter Saur.

Academic Standards

Academic Standards exist to promote authentic scholarship, support the institution's goal of maintaining high standards of academic excellence, and encourage continued ethical behavior of faculty and students to cultivate an educational community which values integrity and produces graduates who carry this commitment forward into professional practice.

As members of the George Mason University community, we are committed to fostering an environment of trust, respect, and scholarly excellence. Our academic standards are the foundation of this commitment, guiding our behavior and interactions within this academic community. The practices for implementing these standards adapt to modern practices, disciplinary contexts, and technological advancements. Our standards are embodied in our courses, policies, and scholarship, and are upheld in the following principles:

- Honesty: Providing accurate information in all academic endeavors, including communications, assignments, and examinations.
- Acknowledgement: Giving proper credit for all contributions to one's work. This involves the use of accurate citations and references for any ideas, words, or materials created by others in the style appropriate to the discipline. It also includes acknowledging shared authorship in group projects, coauthored pieces, and project reports.
- Uniqueness of Work: Ensuring that all submitted work is the result of one's own effort and is original, including free from self-plagiarism. This principle extends to written assignments, code, presentations, exams, and all other forms of academic work.

Violations of these standards—including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication, and cheating—are taken seriously and will be addressed in accordance with university policies. The process for reporting, investigating, and adjudicating violations is outlined in the university's procedures here. Consequences of violations may include academic sanctions, disciplinary actions, and other measures necessary to uphold the integrity of our academic community.

The principles outlined in these academic standards reflect our collective commitment to upholding the highest standards of honesty, acknowledgement, and uniqueness of work. By adhering to these principles, we ensure the continued excellence and integrity of George Mason University's academic community.

Student responsibility: Students are responsible for understanding how these general expectations regarding academic standards apply to each course, assignment, or exam they participate in; students should ask their instructor for clarification on any aspect that is not clear to them.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit the [Disability Services website](#) for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu. Phone: (703) 993-2474.

Student responsibility: Students are responsible for registering with Disability Services and communicating about their approved accommodations with their instructor in advance of any relevant class meeting, assignment, or exam.

FERPA and Use of GMU Email Addresses for Course Communication

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) governs the disclosure of education records for eligible students and is an essential aspect of any course. **Students must use their GMU email account** to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. Instructors will not respond to messages sent from or send messages regarding course content to a non-GMU email address.

Student responsibility: Students are responsible for checking their GMU email regularly for course-related information, and/or ensuring that GMU email messages are forwarded to an account they do check.

Title IX Resources and Required Reporting

As a part of George Mason University's commitment to providing a safe and non-discriminatory learning, living, and working environment for all members of the University community, the University does not discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in any of its education or employment programs and activities. Accordingly, **all non-confidential employees, including your faculty member, have a legal requirement to report to the Title IX Coordinator, all relevant details obtained directly or indirectly about any incident of Prohibited Conduct** (such as sexual harassment, sexual assault, gender-based stalking, dating/domestic violence). Upon notifying the Title IX Coordinator of possible Prohibited Conduct, the Title IX Coordinator will assess the report and determine if outreach is required. If outreach is required, the individual the report is about (the "Complainant") will receive a communication, likely in the form of an email, offering that person the option to meet with a representative of the Title IX office.

For more information about non-confidential employees, resources, and Prohibited Conduct, please see University Policy 1202: [Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence](#). Questions regarding Title IX can be directed to the Title IX Coordinator via email to TitleIX@gmu.edu, by phone at 703-993-8730, or in person on the Fairfax campus in Aquia 373.

Student opportunity: If you prefer to speak to someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential employees in [Student Support & Advocacy (SSAC)](), Counseling and [Psychological Services (CAPS)](), [Student Health Services (SHS)](), and/or the [Office of the University Ombudsperson]().