

**MASTER OF ARTS
in ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP
FIRST-YEAR PROGRAM REVIEW
UNIVERSITY OF SAINT KATHERINE**



Submitted: February 4th 2022

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INTRODUCTION

1. The University of Saint Katherine

The University of Saint Katherine (formerly Saint Katherine College, and hereinafter referred to as the “University”) was founded by Frank J. Papatheofanis, M.D., Ph.D. and incorporated on June 30, 2010 as a non-profit corporation in California. The University first received approval to operate in 2011, under the authority of the California Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education. It was accredited by the WSCUC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) in 2016 and is in good standing.

The University is the only independent Orthodox Christian liberal arts and sciences university in the English-speaking world. It is not part of a larger Orthodox organization. The University’s mission is “To provide a balanced education in the liberal arts and sciences, founded and rooted in the life of the Orthodox Christian Tradition – Inquiry Seeking Wisdom.” The full-time and part-time faculty, as well as non-instructional staff, seek to prepare students for lives of learning, faith, and action in the ever-changing 21st century by emphasizing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will serve students throughout their lives.

The University has offered the Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Sciences (BS) since its inception. The first 14 students began classes in Fall 2011.

There are four undergraduate degree programs. The Bachelor of Arts in Arts and Humanities offers several concentrations including Art, English, History, Psychology, and Theology. The Bachelor of Arts in Business Management has no specializations at present. The Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology offers two concentrations, Exercise Science and Health Science. The Bachelor of Science in Natural Sciences offers three concentrations, Applied Biological Health Sciences, Biological Sciences, and Chemistry and Biochemistry.

2. Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership (MAOL) Degree Program

a. Brief History and Development

From the time of USK’s founding, the vision for the institution has been to develop into a comprehensive university with graduate and professional programs. USK also understood from the start that it would take some time for the University to realize that vision. For several reasons, we believe that recently was the time to move forward with those plans. Enrollment has increased steadily, our financial situation is strong, and when a WSCUC team visited in spring 2018, they recommended that the University develop new revenue streams.

In 2017, USK faculty and staff had begun to develop a proposal for an MA in Global Leadership. A decision was made to postpone further development amid other priorities and doubt as to whether this was exactly the right Master’s program to pursue. At a President’s Cabinet meeting on September 17, 2019, USK President Frank Papatheofanis, MD, PhD, returned to the question of developing a Master’s degree program. People present recollect that it was in the context of meeting the WSCUC recommendation to diversify revenue sources, and that there 13 University of Saint Katherine was still interest in a program related to leadership, an interdisciplinary topic not necessarily aligned with a single undergraduate degree program . Cabinet membership on

September 17 was Frank Papatheofanis, MD, PhD (President); David Huwiler, PhD (Dean/Chief Academic Officer), Marina Trigonis (Registrar and Dean of Admissions), Ryan West (CFO), Daniel Stange (Director of Athletics), Christos Korgan, PhD (Dean of Institutional Research and Effectiveness).

Following President's Cabinet, Dr. Papatheofanis discussed the idea with David Huwiler, PhD and Christos Korgan, PhD, both of whom were members of Academic Senate as well as President's Cabinet. On October 14, Dr. Huwiler sent an email to Dr. Papatheofanis indicating that he had researched programs offered at other universities and developed initial thoughts for an MA in Organizational Leadership. Dr. Huwiler continued his research and forwarded a concept to the Academic Senate for its November 6 meeting. Due to USK's small size, the Academic Senate and its committees discussed all ideas for academic programming as they arise. It was understood that as USK grows, it will eventually need to require triaging and proposal development through academic departments prior to putting an idea on the Academic Senate agenda. The Senate tasked the Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee (CAP) to review and develop the concept of an MA in Organizational Leadership, which it did in coordination with Pete Boukouzis, Business Department Chair, himself a member of Academic Senate. The Academic Senate's review of the proposal in December 2019 and January 2020 is documented in the Senate minutes already. The Senate's approval on January 21, 2020.

WSCUC approval for this submission was received on October 16, 2020.

In March 2021, it was proposed in Academic Senate to create an online version of the MAOL program. The meeting was followed by a vote with unanimous approval in April 2021.

The Senate tasked the Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee (CAP) to review and develop the concept of a new online version of the MA in Organizational Leadership, which it did in coordination with the MAOL Program Director, Dr James Getman.

The Academic Senate's review of the proposal at the 05 April 2021 Academic Senate Meeting, and subsequently voted on this initiative.

The MAOL online initiative was then presented to the President's Cabinet for review and approval. The President's Cabinet voted and approval to move forward with the submission of a Substantive Change proposal for the new MAOL Program was on 07 April 2021.

WSCUC approval for this submission was received on October 15, 2021.

USK has taken several important steps to create a "graduate culture." As the faculty designed the graduate program, it significantly increased the academic rigor of the graduate program relative to existing undergraduate programs. Each student is required to attend an online research methods course and satisfy this requirement prior to attending his or her first course in the curriculum. The Program Director advises on options that will meet the intent of this requirement. Every course in the graduate program will include a substantial research project.

The students have weekly reading assignments from original research in the field that will be

discussed in class. The program culminates in a master's thesis, required of all students in order to obtain their degree. To ensure that students have access to quality research materials, the University has invested in the EBSCO Academic Elite collection of academic journals, and students have access to the holdings at UCSD and CSUSM and other local institutions. MAOL students are mentored and advised by their academic advisor, Thesis Chair, and career services specialist at a minimum.

b. Current Status

Dr. James Getman serves as the Program director for the MAOL program. Two 2 students completing their research-based Thesis projects with Organizational Leadership topics. The unique element of the online version of the MAOL Program is that it is a completely asynchronous online program that culminates with a researched-based Thesis project, which differentiates this program from similar programs in this field.

The MAOL Program is currently enrolled with the 4th Cohort, with a total of 23 students enrolled. There are currently 4 core classes in session, with a Capstone Thesis writing class in session.

c. Future Plans and Expectations

There are currently 2 students who applied for the Fall 2022 semester.

In addition, the MAOL Program will be expanding and offering concentrations in Sports Management, Biotechnology, and Financial Management. The Sports Management Concentration will also include a class called "Women in Sports Management" to capitalize on our high number of female athletes who have expressed an interest in Sports Management at the graduate level, as well as the opportunity to take advantage of the local environment where a concentration of this magnitude is extremely lacking.

THE SELF-STUDY

I. Defining the Educational Objectives and Mission Alignment

A. Relationship to Mission and Strategic Plan

The USK mission is to provide a balanced education in the liberal arts and sciences, founded and rooted in the life of the Orthodox Christian tradition – *Inquiry seeking Wisdom*. Graduate level study in general, and of organizational leadership, is a continuation of this mission, offering advanced inquiry into how to lead wisely in the context of the modern economy and timeless principles.

The USK vision is to inspire lives of learning, faith, and action through a distinctive and transformative Christian education. The MAOL online program imparts theories, frameworks, techniques, and examples that allow and inspire students to continue to learn as they pursue a career. The Orthodox Christian tradition affirms that faith demands action, and accordingly our courses and advisors encourage students of every faith or none to articulate their own values and explore how to express them in their work and as community members and citizens.

The online master's degree program in Organizational Leadership helps USK achieve all seven goals of its strategic plan. **Orthodox Christianity** informs the vision for leadership; **Capacity Building** is already occurring through program design; **Scale** increases in both enrollment and programming; **Pedagogy** for this program addresses both the external world and one's internal motivations; **Scholarship** at the school gains new prominence; **Community** and **Service** are promoted through an emphasis on lifelong leadership and action.

1. **ORTHODOXY:** Promote an Orthodox Christian-inspired education and a vibrant Christ-centered campus life.
2. **CAPACITY BUILDING:** Cultivate the processes, resources, and relationships needed for enduring success.
3. **SCALE:** Amplify the University's unique voice in higher education through expanded enrollment and programming.
4. **PEDAGOGY:** Teach so that students learn about the world and about themselves.
5. **SCHOLARSHIP:** Involve students and faculty in advancing their fields.
6. **COMMUNITY:** Put moral and ethical leadership at the center of campus life.
7. **SERVICE:** Enrich students' and neighbors' lives through action.

B. Institutional Learning Outcomes

The University's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are as follows:

1. Students communicate ideas clearly and concisely in both oral and written form (Articulate Communication Written and Oral)
2. Students develop a sense of inquiry rooted in critical thinking, research and analysis (Critical, Informed Inquiry)
3. Students engage in interdisciplinary approaches to learning that involve integrative thinking, collaboration with others, and the application of theoretical knowledge to a range of practical issues (Broad, Interdisciplinary Insight)
4. Students establish a specialized set of intellectual and/or technical skills applicable within their discipline (Specialized Intellectual Skills)
5. Students contribute self-reflectively to local communities and global society (Applied and Collaborative Knowledge)
6. Students gain an appreciation for the historical Christian faith and deepen their own spiritual life in an Orthodox Christian context (Enriched Christian Spirituality)

C. Alignment of ILOs and MAOL PLOs

The MAOL Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are as follows:

PLO 1: Recognize theories, terms, ideas, practices and skills specific to organizational leadership in the 21st century workplace. (Advanced Information Literacy)

PLO 2: Demonstrate intercultural competence in addressing civic, social, environmental and economic issues dynamic and evolving workplace environments. (Problem Solving)

PLO 3: Identify, describe, and evaluate theories used for analyzing organizations and institutions and their relationship to society. (Critical Thinking)

PLO 4: Evaluate and apply theories of leadership in order to create effective team environments and strategies in the modern workplace. (Critical Thinking)

PLO 5: Synthesize knowledge about current communication technologies and use them effectively in professional and business environments. (Communication)

D. Key Findings and Recommendations

Key Findings	Recommendations
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<p>1. Initial Student Course surveys indicated a deficiency in one of the initial MAOL professors.</p>	<p>1. Additional faculty were recruited and engagement and retention have scored more favorably on subsequent surveys.</p>
<p>2. There was a need to create a Student Learning Outcome (SLO) program to conduct Summative Assessments of each student, in each class as they related to each CLO.</p>	<p>2. A SLO program, unique to the MAOL Program was created that measures assessment in each class. This data is stored with the Program Director and is used to improve content for subsequent classes.</p>
<p>3. A need was uncovered for an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to support Human Subjects research in support of BUS-599 Thesis projects.</p>	<p>3. An IRB Committee was established and trained using an outside agency. Each student is also required to attend Human Subjects research training prior to submitting an IRB application for research.</p>
<p>4. Due to the amount of Research and Thesis papers of future Cohorts, an additional “Reviewer” is needed to assist the BUS-599 Professor to help ensure graduate-level quality papers.</p>	<p>4. USK is currently recruiting a Thesis Review to assist BUS-599 in maintaining quality of Thesis research papers.</p>
<p>5. Recruitment of foreign students will be problematic with a fully asynchronous program, since there are requirements for foreign students to attend in-person classes</p>	<p>5. Administration is investigating the specifics of this requirement in an attempt to satisfy the requirement as well as the needed of foreign graduate students.</p>

II. Core Commitment to Institutional Integrity, Sustainability, and Accountability

A. Demand for the Program

a. Recruitment

We will continue to market the program to USK students and alumni, graduates of other colleges in the greater San Diego region, local military members, and other college graduates in California. As detailed in our Marketing Plan, we have created a brochure and a dedicated page on our website and asked our contracted social media firm to create call-to-action ads on Instagram that target users aged 20-29 as well as current and former military in the region. The

budget includes allocations for a Marketing specialist and significant marketing expenditures to improve our messaging, targeting, ad placement, and relationship-building with potential students.

b. Enrollment Growth

Enrollment projections are appropriately conservative. While it might be possible to recruit a much larger number of students, the proposal and budget top out at two 15-student cohorts per year at steady state. Fifteen students in a cohort ensures that all students receive individual attention. For a small school such as USK, 30 students total in a single graduate program represents a significant expansion.

USK undergraduates form a pool likely to generate applications each semester. Some students from all four of USK's undergraduate degree programs, and especially its largest degree program, Business, will see the MAOL online program as the logical extension of their studies at USK. Twelve of the 15 students in the first two on-campus cohorts had completed their undergraduate degree at USK. Other recent college graduates in California form a much larger pool of potential applicants. National and regional employment trends from multiple sources indicate that such a program teaches marketable skills for well-paying jobs. USK's surveys of national and regional employers demonstrated employer interest in job applicants with an MAOL and the potential for successful candidates to receive significant benefits such as opportunities for faster promotion. The budget accommodates social media marketing and other advertising beyond anything the University has previously attempted.

Southern Californians who want to enroll in an online master's program at a university with a physical presence in the region, much less a Christian identity, but lack the experience and/or income required for executive-oriented programs have limited options.

An enrollment funnel is presented as part of the marketing plan. The funnel is updated periodically, and marketing efforts planned for later cohorts will be accelerated if needed.

The projected 85% retention rate has three sources:

- The on-campus MAOL program has had an 87% retention rate in its first year.
- The Council of Graduate Schools did an extensive master's Completion Project and calculated an 86% retention rate for MBA programs. See <https://cgsnet.org/masters-completion-project>.
- One-year retention for undergraduates was 78% for the Fall 2019 cohort. The more mature students in the master's program are unlikely to drop out of a 15-month degree-granting program, justifying a modestly higher projected retention rate.

c. Class Sizes

Class sizes for the synchronous and asynchronous MAOL program have varied since the inception of the program. Class sizes have ranged from 11 to 14 students, with an average

enrollment of 13 students. The exception to these numbers has been the BUS-599 Thesis writing Capstone class which has ranged from 2 to 8 students.

USK maintains sufficient faculty capacity to meet these current enrollment demands, as well as future expansion of anticipated student enrollments.

B. Program Inputs and Processes

a. Faculty, including Professional Development

The USK Faculty Support Specialist has been instrumental in providing resources and individual training for faculty. USK obtained the service of an Instructional Designer, with specific expertise in developing and delivering online and asynchronous course content.

The instructional designer developed an online Faculty Orientation course, specifically designed to educate and training faculty during the onboarding process in the intricacies of online content development and delivery, focusing heavily on academic integrity.

In addition, all in-house professional development events are now recorded and available on the USK Faculty Resource Page for access by asynchronous faculty.

b. Administration and Administrative Support

MAOL Faculty work directly with the Program Director to ensure proper facilitation of their respective courses.

The CAO is also available for MAOL faculty direction and input. The CAO also has an open door policy and encourages faculty to drop in for impromptu communications. Conversations with both the CAO include topics such as subject specific content, teaching methods, school policy, and academic integrity.

c. Facilities and Technology

The MAOL program is an intensive research and writing based curriculum. There is an elaborate digital library for the asynchronous students to use in support of class assignments and Thesis research. These include subscriptions to JSTOR and Ebscohost electronic libraries.

d. Course Offerings

Course offerings for the MAOL program include:

BUS-510: Leadership in Organizations

COM-510: Strategic Communications

BUS-515: Performance Management

BUS-525: Managing Innovation and Change

BUS-530: Strategic Planning

BUS-520: Data Analysis and Decision Making

BUS-540: Crisis Management

ECO-510 Managerial Economics

BUS-535: Project Management

BUS-599: Thesis Writing

In additional, the initial concentration in Sports Management is tentatively scheduled to include the following classes:

MAOL “Core” classes:

BUS 510: Leadership and Organizations

COM 510: Strategic Communications

BUS 525: Managing Innovation and Change

BUS 520: Analytics and Data-Driven Decision Making

BUS 530: Strategic Planning

BUS-599: Thesis Writing

Sports Management Concentration:

SPM 510: Sports Law / Risk Management

SPM 515: Sports Marketing and Media

SPM 520: Women in Sports Management

SPM 525: Contemporary Sport, Society, and Globalization

III. Core Commitment to Student Learning and Success

A. Program Learning Outcomes

a. Overview of Assessment Plan

The summative assessment plan for the MAOL Program is in place and each class is assigned a project that captures the Assessment criteria for each class. In additional, a comprehensive Student Learning Outcome (SLO) program has been developed to assess each individual student against specific Course Learning Outcomes (CLO’s) for each course.

B. Program Faculty

a. Teaching

The MAOL program is made up of committed and qualified faculty members. Available

faculty include four members with terminal degrees (PhD), one with a JD, one pending a PhD upon completion of a Dissertation, and one with an MBA. This diverse and experience cadre provides considerable depth and knowledge to the curriculum and directly assists with research and writing development.

At least one faculty development seminar is offered per semester. These seminars cover such topics as online education, assessment, differentiation, school policies, tips on how to use the LMS and writing across the curriculum. Teaching methodologies and general course navigation tools are addressed, however, subject specific training is not included.

Faculty have access to a Faculty Access Page on the school website. Resources on the Faculty Access Page include training, announcements, handbooks, library resources, and organizational resources.

Regular communication between administration and faculty takes place in the Monday Memo.

b. Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity

Though USK MAOL faculty members have extensive experience with research, this is an area in need of growth. MAOL faculty have published in the past, however, they have not published recently, nor have they done so while representing USK. Two MAOL faculty members are interested in pursuing research and publication in the near future and the MAOL Program Director is currently in development of a research article.

C. Credit Hour Policy

The USK Instructional Designer and MAOL Program Director used a very systematic and calculated approach to developing the new MAOL online curriculum. Relying on the quantification of online learning research conducted by Powell, Helm, Layne and Ice (2012), a formulation table was created to convert currently approved in-person content to rigorous and effective online content necessary for delivery of an online graduate level program. This approach also ensures strict adherence to WSCUC and USK credit hour policies.

D. Retention, Graduation, and Student Services

Student retention in the MAOL program is strong. Cohort #1 started with a modest 11 students. There are currently 23 students enrolled throughout 4 Cohorts. Three students withdrew for a variety of reason, and two students recently completed their research-based Thesis project (December 2021). It is anticipated that a total of 10 students will complete their Thesis projects and attend formal Commencement ceremonies in May 2022.

Student Career Services is a growing program in support of the MAOL program. Currently, the MAOL students are exposed to four Career Services sessions throughout the course of the 15-month program:

Session 1: Resume Presentation

Session 2: Small Group Resume Review

Session 3: Resume and Cover Letter Finalization

D. Disciplinary, Professional, and Community Interactions

MAOL students are encouraged to engage peers in the local community. The MAOL Department is currently researching professional organizations and subscriptions that would allow students to attend professional conferences in their area of interest. Currently there is no formal progress on this initiative.

Students are also encouraged to present their Thesis findings at professional conferences, and USK has established a stipend program to compensate MAOL students for delivering their findings and expanding their field of study.

IV. Core Commitment to Quality and Continuous Improvement

A. Input from Local Employers and Practitioners

To hear directly from regional employers, USK conducted surveys of businesspeople through the San Marcos Chamber of Commerce, the Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce, companies in the fitness/athletics sector, and USK Trustees and their associates prior to starting the on-campus program. More recently, USK launched a national survey to assess the interest from employers to hire MAOL graduates, and the interest from students obtaining an MAOL degree via an online course of instruction. Responses were overwhelmingly positive.

To assess the competitive landscape, we profiled the most similar programs offered by other universities regionally and nationally. Regional programs are typically more expensive, take much longer, and/or are tailored to more specific types of students. National programs include expensive options at prestigious universities and more price-competitive options at online universities that lack a local footprint or Christian identity and may be perceived as somewhat generic by some potential students.

V. Summary of Findings

The MAOL Program can be summarized with the following statements:

The MAOL program has made tremendous progress in the previous year, having gone from a concept to a fully accredited in-person and asynchronous program. During this development phase, many areas of improvement were identified and acted on:

1. Faculty Manning: It was immediately evident that a “linear” program for all students (taking the same classes in sequence) was impossible to implement. From the first Cohort, some students experienced personal, professional, and medical setbacks that required them to postpone a class to a future semester. Since this is a small program with limited resources, a balance needed to be struck between elongating graduation dates and obtaining new faculty to get the students “back on track”. These additional faculty hires were not in the original budget but provided an

opportunity to recruit new and invigorated faculty who will complement the MAOL program is it continues to grow and develop.

2. Institutional Review Board (IRB): It became immediately apparent that a structured IRB process needed to be put in place to ensure the integrity of human subject research. This was something that was not discussed during development of the MAOL program. The Program was quick to pivot, creating an IRB Committee, IRB Committee training program, as well as assigning each student mandatory Human Subjects Research training. In addition, an IRB Application program was implemented to ensure proper approval of research initiatives in order to protect human subjects, the student researcher, and institution. This is a macro-view program that can be utilized by all other USK Graduate program that follow. The program is also designed to support faculty research-initiatives as they arise.

3. Recruitment of foreign students: USK has a long history of recruiting student athletes from foreign countries. With a fully asynchronous program, there are requirements for graduate student to attend in-person learning. As the MAOL program is now fully asynchronous, this is problematic, and something the institution is monitoring in order to ensure Graduate student athletes have the ability to attend the MAOL (and other graduate) programs.

VI. Program Review Themes for Future Inquiry

The MAOL Program continues to develop with the initiative for Concentrations that will enhance the program and make the USK MAOL Program more attractive to the California population outside of USK.

The MAOL Program is also seeking new and innovative recruitment techniques, with a recent initiative to focus on veteran and active-duty military not resulting in enrollment.

Overall, this has been a successful start to the first-ever Graduate level program at the University of Saint Katherine. From enrollment, to the quality of the initial research-based Thesis projects, initial expectations have been greatly exceeded. Compounding on lessons learned from the initial Cohorts, there is unlimited potential for the MAOL Program.