



Alisa Pyszka - Executive Director Center for Real Estate

Meet Alisa Pyszka, the new executive director for the Center for Real Estate at The School of Business. We asked Alisa about her journey to The School of Business.

Can you tell us a little about yourself (what is your background)?

I grew up in the suburbs of Kansas City, MO (Overland Park, KS) which makes me very pragmatic with a streak of sarcasm that has been tempered since living on the West Coast. I received my Masters in Urban Planning from the University of Kansas. Once I graduated, I immediately bought a one-way ticket to Portland: the mecca of planning innovation in 1996.

My career began in entitlement project management for local and national retailers. It shifted in 2008 when I managed the economic development department for Vancouver, WA for approximately five years. Since then, I have worked with cities and regions developing economic development strategies, most of the time through my own consulting firm Bridge Economic Development.



What led you to PSU?

I was an Adjunct Professor with the College of Urban and Public Affairs for the past six years teaching a course on economic development policy. Recently, I became a member of the Center for Real Estate Advisory Board, and am currently serving on the jury for the PSU Placemaking Design Competition. The opportunity to lead the Center for Real Estate encompasses all this work and my relationships with PSU faculty and staff.

Why would students want to study real estate at PSU?

Students should study real estate at PSU if they want to immediately build a career in real estate. Our faculty is incredibly committed to building networks and connecting students to internships and job opportunities. Likewise, the real estate industry is incredibly supportive of the Center as mentors, adjunct professors, and donors. The result of this relationship is that our graduates realize a 100 percent employment rate within 6 months of graduation, and a \$36,500 average salary increase according to The School of Business Career Center.

What are your plans for the Center for Real Estate?

The commercial real estate industry is very relational. Building a strong network with existing professionals and among students within a cohort is incredibly important. My immediate goal is to grow enrollment with strategic marketing of the Master of Science in Real Estate (MSRE) and Undergraduate Minor in Property Management programs. When I talk to our amazing students, I hear consistently that the program is incredible but that people just do not know about it. My goal is to change that.

Anything you would like to add that we didn't ask?

Commercial real estate is a unique area of business because it is vital to the health of a city. The PSU Center for Real Estate has a distinct culture in that it studies the financial aspects of real estate, which is critical, but also considers the civic responsibility of how a building will shape the environment for decades to come. Dr. Ann Cudd's Placemaking initiative and vision for PSU to lead the renaissance of downtown Portland aligns with the Center's focus and I am incredibly proud to be working on behalf of PSU right now.

