

**THE MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM IN
INDUSTRIAL/ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
AT WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY**

PROGRAM GUIDE



WESTERN
KENTUCKY
UNIVERSITY

May 2005

This is a working document.
Questions, comments, recommendations for changes and/or additions are welcome!

Betsy Shoenfelt, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
Western Kentucky University
1906 College Heights Blvd., #21030
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1030
phone: 270/745-4418

INTRODUCTION

The Industrial/Organizational Psychology program at Western Kentucky University is a two-year graduate program designed for students seeking preparation as MA psychologists in business, industry, service organizations, consulting firms, or government agencies. The objective of the program is the development of marketable skills in the areas of test construction and validation, personnel selection and placement, performance appraisal, and training. Work motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational development techniques are also studied. The development of applied skills is achieved through the integration of practical experience and formal course work. We adhere to a scientist-practitioner model of training. We train our students to evaluate and apply theory and research. In particular, our program is designed to train personnel specialists.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There are categories of courses required for all graduate students in Psychology and specific course requirements for the I/O Program. The required courses follow sequentially, arranged by the semester in which the course is typically offered/taken. For some courses, I/O students are required to enroll in sections specifically designated for our program.

FALL: 1st SEMESTER

1. PSYCHOLOGY 570 - Job Analysis and Compensation

This course provides an introduction to job analysis, job evaluation, compensation and benefits. The course acquaints the students with different methods and techniques of job analysis used in a variety of personnel applications. Compensation and benefits are topics many of our graduates have found to be relevant to their human resource management jobs.

2. PSYCHOLOGY 505 - Statistical Software for Behavioral Scientists (Statpack)

The research tool introduces the student to the main frame and the personal computer as instruments for facilitating the statistical analyses of data. Skills in using the major statistical analyses software (SPSS, SAS, and/or BMDP) are developed. This course fulfills the research tool requirement of the WKU Graduate College.

3. PSYCHOLOGY 512 - Experimental Design

Experimental Design is a graduate-level statistics and design course.

4. PSYCHOLOGY 541 - Professional Psychology

Professional Psychology covers ethics, legal issues, current professional issues (e.g., confidentiality, areas of competency), and some methodology issues including organizational assessment and feedback techniques.

SPRING: 2nd SEMESTER**1. PSYCHOLOGY 571 - Personnel Psychology**

Personnel Psychology focuses on employee selection procedures with an emphasis on performance appraisal, testing, criterion development, and validation. There is direct involvement in data analysis and typically in the collection of data as well.

2. PSYCHOLOGY 572 - Organizational Psychology

Organizational Psychology covers theories of motivation, leadership, job satisfaction, organization theory, OD, and TQM. There is an emphasis on organizational skills that employers/graduates may find useful, e.g., behavioral improvement programs utilizing goal setting and feedback, application of group decision-making techniques.

3. PSYCHOLOGY 513 - Advanced Statistical Analysis

The focus of advanced statistics is regression analysis. Time permitting, related multivariate procedures including factor analysis, cluster analysis, and multiple dimensional scaling are reviewed.

4. PSYCHOLOGY 563 - Statistics and Psychometric Theory

Psychometrics covers topics such as assessment or reliability and validity, test construction, measurement theory, and scaling.

SUMMER FOLLOWING 1st YEAR:

Typically students take this time to gain practical experience with an internship (6 hours). An internship is **not** required, but does allow the student to earn six hours of internship course credit (Psychology 592), as well as experience in the "real world". Those students that do not participate in an internship must complete additional course work to meet the hours required for completion of the program. One option for doing this is to take a class or classes during the summer sessions. However, there typically are very few appropriate graduate level courses offered at Western during the summer term.

FALL: 3rd SEMESTER**1. PSYCHOLOGY 673 - Advanced Training in Business and Industry**

Training focuses on conducting training needs analysis; designing, developing, and implementing training programs (technical and managerial); and evaluating the effectiveness of training programs in relation to productivity and satisfaction criteria.

2. PSYCHOLOGY 552 - Advanced Social Psychology

Advanced Social Psychology covers interpersonal perception, group dynamics, intergroup relations, attitude formation and change, social influence, gender issues, and other topics relevant for industrial/organizational psychologists.

3. PSYCHOLOGY 599 - Thesis

The I/O-Social faculty and students meet weekly for colloquium presentations of individual research. First-year and second-year students are required to attend. Typically faculty will present first followed by second-year student presentations of the thesis proposal. Students work with their thesis chair and committee in preparing the proposal. Any student that does not have his/her thesis proposal ready to go to committee by the end of the Fall semester (as confirmed by the committee chair) may have his/her assistantship terminated for the Spring semester.

SPRING: 4th SEMESTER

1. PSYCHOLOGY 670 - EEO, the Law, and Ethical Considerations

EEO covers issues relevant to providing equal employment opportunity, the Uniform Guidelines regarding selection practices, a review of the relevant major court decisions and their implications for the personnel specialist, and professional and ethical considerations in the practice of I/O psychology.

2. PSYCHOLOGY 520 - Psychology of Individual Differences

The focus of this course is a review of areas of individual differences (e.g., abilities, skills, interests, values, and personality), with an emphasis on measurement techniques and the implications of gender and race differences in the employment context.

The other three hours of thesis credit (Psychology 599) are usually taken during this semester.

FACULTY OBLIGATIONS

Faculty members who will be teaching graduate courses in the I/O sequence in any given semester will meet prior to the beginning of that semester to coordinate requirements among the classes offered that semester to ensure that collectively a reasonable graduate-level workload is placed on the students. Faculty expectations for each class will be described in the course syllabus distributed at the beginning of the semester. Substantial requirements should be identified in the syllabus and additional substantial requirements should not be added during the semester. Exams during the semester should be given with reasonable time limits (not to exceed 3 hours) that allow most students to complete the exam in an appropriate manner.

I/O/Social faculty will meet at the end of each semester to review the progress of each student enrolled in the I/O program to determine whether or not the student will be recommended for continuation in the program. A student receiving a grade lower than a "B" in any course in the I/O sequence will be required to repeat that course.

CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Forty-eight credit hours are required for completion of the I/O master's degree. In addition to the 36 hours of course work identified above, six hours of thesis (Psychology 599) and six hours of internship (Psychology 592; or approved substitution) are required. If the student is unable to find an internship placement, six hours of approved graduate-level course work must be completed. The completion of a thesis on an industrial/organizational psychology topic is required. Students are not permitted to walk in the graduation ceremony without having completed a thesis.

THESIS REQUIREMENT

Students are required to complete a thesis. The thesis is not necessarily a "unique contribution to the field," but more typically a demonstration of the kind of research the student might be called upon to do at the MA level (e.g., test development, validation of a particular instrument, etc.). It typically has less of a theoretical orientation and more of a practical orientation. Students are strongly encouraged to select a thesis topic late in their first year in order to complete the thesis by the end of the second year. The student must select a thesis committee of three graduate faculty members, one of whom will serve as the chair. The student will work closely with the chair of his/her committee to write a thesis proposal which is presented to the full committee prior to beginning of the data collection phase of the thesis. Upon completion of the thesis, the student is required to defend the thesis before the committee and other interested members of the Psychology Department. The thesis format must follow American Psychological Association guidelines as well as any stipulated by the Graduate Office of Western Kentucky University.

INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

We strongly encourage our students to participate in an internship the summer following the first year of the program. Six hours of credit may be earned for the internship or practicum. To receive the six hours of internship credit, a minimum of 20 hours per week is required in an organizational setting. However, depending on the duration of the internship, this may be negotiable. The internship experience (and grade assignment) must be supervised by a faculty member. The student must make supervision arrangements with an appropriate faculty member prior to beginning the internship. The faculty member and student will negotiate the specific requirements for the internship. Such requirements typically include keeping a daily task journal documenting involvement in organizational projects, submitting a bi-weekly written report, and writing a fairly comprehensive technical report. The technical report should include how the student obtained their position, what the internship entailed, who the student worked for in the organization, a description of the conditions under which the student worked, and a detailed description of the projects with which the student was involved. This project description should include the organizational objectives for the project, tasks involved in the project, and any work products of the project, as well as the status of the project upon completion of the internship. A semi-formal presentation of the internship experience will be made by each student intern. This presentation will be made in a colloquium for the I/O graduate students and faculty.

PROFESSIONALISM

The graduate program is intended to develop human resource professionals. Students are expected to behave in a manner consistent with this role. This includes dress, demeanor, and ethical conduct. It is the policy of the university that sexual harassment in any form will not be tolerated; graduate students holding assistantships should be particularly sensitive to their responsibility in following this policy.

ASSISTANTSHIPS

Research and teaching assistantships are available on a competitive basis and carry exemption from out-of-state tuition. Assistantships are awarded in amounts ranging from \$2,500 to \$8,000 per year and require seven to twenty hours of work per week from the graduate student. The assistantship duties vary depending upon the assignment but typically include collecting and analyzing data, conducting literature reviews, and/or assisting in teaching classes. Placement of graduate students with faculty members based on the experience and background of the student, the similarity of interests of the student and faculty member, and the faculty member's needs. It is recommended that students contact faculty with whom they are interested to gain an understanding of what an assistantship with that professor would involve. Assistantships are not limited to placement with the I/O faculty; a number of graduate students work for other departments or on research grants. Once appointed, graduate assistants must maintain a GPA of 3.0 in all course work. Paychecks are distributed bi-weekly and can be picked up from the departmental secretary. Students may get some idea of professors they may like to work for by reviewing the following brief descriptions of faculty and their interests.

FACULTY

Reagan Brown, Ph.D. (Virginia Tech, 1997), Associate Professor: personnel selection, job analyses, psychometrics, and personality testing.

John Bruni, Ph.D. (Texas Christian University, 1984), Associate Professor: statistics, and test theory.

Sam McFarland, Ph.D. (Vanderbilt University, 1971), Professor: social psychology, psychology of religion, and cross-cultural studies of personality. (Optional Retirement)

Kathi Minor-Rubino, Ph.D. (University of Michigan, 2004), Assistant Professor: social psychology, psychology of women, harassment, incivility, social power and status.

Tony Paquin, Ph.D. (Texas A&M, 1997), Assistant Professor: cross-cultural issues, productivity/organizational effectiveness, motivation in work settings.

Jackie Pope, Ph.D. (University of Louisville, 1991), Associate Professor: social psychology, diversity issues, jury decision making, and minority issues.

Betsy Shoenfelt, Ph.D. (Louisiana State University, 1983), Professor, Director I/O Program: training, EEO, motivation, group/team dynamics, performance, and sport psychology.

TIME FRAME FOR SELECTED IMPORTANT TASKS

FIRST YEAR

Fall Semester:

- o Adjust to WKU and classes!
- o Learn computer skills. The Micro-computer lab is located on the 2nd floor of Tate Page Hall.
- o Submit Form C to the Graduate College. The I/O Program Moderator will designate the required courses to be included on the form; the student will sign the form and turns it in to the moderator. This is the degree program agreement with the University.

Spring Semester:

- o Start thinking about your thesis (not a requirement, just a suggestion!).
- o Plan for the summer following the semester: an internship (or classes).

Summer:

- o Internship (or classes).
- o Now is the time to begin to **seriously** think about a thesis topic.

SECOND YEAR

Fall Semester:

- o Submit Form D to Graduate College.
- o Identify your thesis topic and committee.
- o Develop your thesis proposal and have committee meeting.
- o Begin data collection for your thesis.

Spring Semester:

- o Finish your thesis. Submit Form E to Graduate College.
- o Find a job!

Successful Graduate Students	Unsuccessful Graduate Students
Complete projects early.	Wait until the last minute to do things.
Do more than is necessary to complete projects and assignments.	Do the minimum amount of work necessary to “get it done.”
Attempt to determine the expectations of professors/supervisors and modify their behaviors accordingly.	Expect to be told what to do.
Say, “Thank you for this opportunity.”	Say, “Can you believe what he/she is making me do?”
Examine their perceived failures to determine what worked and what did not work. They continue with what worked and modify what did not.	Blame others for their perceived failures.
Welcome and accept criticism (even unfair criticism) with equanimity and sometimes ask for more feedback.	Feel threatened by criticism and become angry when given feedback.
Have a desire to learn and become better students and people, regardless of the grade attached to the project.	Just want to get through graduate school.
Feel a sense of accomplishment at the end of the semester/year.	Feel a sense of relief at the end of the semester/year.
Put in as much time as is necessary to do a complete and thorough job on a project.	Try to complete projects as quickly as possible.
Persevere through setbacks.	Give up when things get tough.
Will be satisfied and successful professionals.	Will wonder where it all went wrong and regret entering the profession.

What are you?

What do you want to be?

