WELCOME TARA!

In the fall of 2009 our program will welcome Dr. Tara Behrend as a new member of the IO faculty. More info on Tara is to come, but here is a short intro:

Tara S. Behrend earned her B.S. from the University of Pittsburgh, and her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in I/O from North Carolina State University. Her research interests center around understanding and resolving barriers to computer-mediated work effectiveness, especially with regard to training, recruiting, and teamwork. She also maintains an active interest in research methods and statistics. She has consulted for a variety of public and private organizations in the areas of job analysis, selection, and training evaluation. We look forward to welcoming her to the program in August!

YOU’RE INVITED: CROSSROADS SEMINAR

Please join us for the Crossroads Seminar “Women Leaders in Global Corporations,” organized by The Department of Organizational Sciences and Communication in collaboration with GW’s Women’s Leadership Institute.

Keynote Speaker:

Patricia Werhane

A bout the S peaker: Patricia H. Werhane is the Ruffin Professor of Business Ethics and Senior Fellow at the Olsson Center for Applied Ethics in the Darden School, the University of Virginia. She has a joint appointment at DePaul University as the Wicklander Professor of Business Ethics and Director of the Institute for Business and Professional Ethics. She has published numerous articles and is the author or editor of over twenty books. She is the founder and former Editor-in-Chief of Business Ethics Quarterly, the journal of the Society for Business Ethics, and she is an Academic Advisor to the Business Roundtable Institute for Corporate Ethics. Her most recent book is, Women in Business: The Changing Face of Leadership, co-authored with Margaret Posig, Lisa Gundry, Laurel Ofstein, and Elizabeth Powell.

A bout the S eminar: Values-based leadership can be defined as a set of interactive transforming relationships between leaders and followers who intend to create real change based on their mutual values and purposes. In a recent study of women leaders in corporate America we found overwhelming evidence of this kind of leadership. In the “flat” global world of the 21st century it is to a company’s peril to ignore these models and to dismiss the possibility of women as well as men leading the major multinational enterprises.

WHAT: Crossroads Seminar
Women Leaders in Global Corporations

WHEN: Tuesday, March 31st
5:30 – 7:00 PM

WHERE: Marvin Center 800
21st St., NW, Room. 405

** Free Admission **

Reception to precede seminar

Please RSVP by calling
(202) 994-1878
Dr. Lynn Offermann and Dr. Charmine Härtel

Dr. Offermann’s Trip to Australia

In the Fall of 2008 Dr. Lynn Offermann took a trip “Down Under” at the invitation of the First Conference of the Diversity and Social Inclusion Consortium — a two-day conference attended by diversity researchers and practitioners from academia, government, and industry designed to bring together those working in Australia to promote diversity. Dr. Offermann gave an invited address at the conference, titled “Minorities and Majorities at Work: The impact of Inclusive Work Climate.”

Besides attending the conference, Dr. Offermann worked with Dr. Charmine Härtel of Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, and gave a talk to students and faculty at the university about microaggressions, a current research topic in our department (see page 4 for more info). She also gave a talk at Bond University in Gold Coast on “Leading Diversity,” and collected additional data for her NSF grant at four worksites across Australia.

Dr. Lynn Offermann and Dr. Charmine Härtel

Congratulations, Courtney and Ken!

Ken Matos and Courtney Morewitz successfully defended their dissertations on February 26. Here is more information about their dissertation topics, in their own words.

Ken Matos
Relational Demography, Linguistic Diversity, and Workplace Attitudes

Recent increases in the Spanish-speaking Hispanic population have led to a transformation of the American workplace where English and Spanish-speakers must work together to accomplish common goals despite speaking different languages. My dissertation examined whether differing proportions of Spanish-speaking employees impacts Spanish and English-speakers' views of their coworkers and advancement opportunities. I used survey data collected from hourly employees at 260 U.S. locations of a large service organization with varying percentages of English and Spanish-speaking employees.

I found that the proportion of Spanish-speaking employees does influence the attitudes of both Spanish and English-speaking employees, though additional moderator variables were needed to isolate effects. For example, when intent to stay is low, Spanish-speaking Hispanics have a more positive view of their coworkers at worksites with fewer Spanish-speakers. However, when intent to stay was high, Spanish-speaking Hispanics had more positive perceptions of advancement opportunity when there were more Spanish-speakers. I also found that when opinions of immediate supervisors are high, greater percentages of Spanish-speaking employees were associated with more negative perceptions of coworkers and advancement opportunities for English-speaking Whites. This suggests that researchers need to consider a variety of contextual factors in order to predict how different subgroups of employees will react to the presence of coworkers who speak different languages.

Courtney Morewitz
Climate Strength as a Moderator of the Relationship between Person-Organization Fit and Job Performance

Throughout my studies at GW, I have been interested in the concept of person-organization (P-O) fit and its potential value in personnel selection and relative contribution to employee engagement. Despite a wealth of research indicating that P-O fit is significantly related to a variety of positive work attitudes and contextual performance, the relationship between P-O fit and job performance has been inconsistent. My dissertation examined this inconsistency by proposing and testing a mediated moderation model where the relationship between P-O fit and job performance is both moderated by the strength of the work unit’s organizational climate and mediated by organizational commitment. Unfortunately, my model was not supported, which could be a function of some of the methodological limitations for how P-O fit was conceptualized and measured. However, I did find that organizational commitment was significantly related to perceptions of the work unit’s organizational climate as well as job performance. Many thanks to my committee (Nick Vasilopoulos, Lynn Offermann, Dana Dunleavy, Nils Olsen, Liz Davis, and Jaclyn Jensen) for all of their feedback and support throughout the process!
Choice and Decision Making


(Article chosen and reviewed by Tessa Basford)

Would you rather buy meat from a butcher advertising it as 75% lean or from a butcher advertising it as 25% fat? Which butcher would you trust more? Your answers to these two questions may be incompatible.

In *Faming, intentions, and trust-choice incompatibility*, Keren (2007) examines the impact of positively and negatively framed messages on choice decisions and trust perceptions. He found that though people tend to choose to purchase items that are presented positively (75% lean) over those that are described negatively (25% fat), they are more likely to trust sellers who negatively frame the message (25% fat) than sellers who positively frame it (75% lean).

This trust-choice incompatibility does not necessarily contradict the extensive research that has shown highly credible sources to be more persuasive than less credible ones. Rather, Keren proposes that buyers simply do not always consider the credibility or trustworthiness of sellers. If buyers assume sellers to be trustworthy by default, they may not even factor trust into their purchasing decisions. On the other hand, if buyers are primed to think about sellers’ trustworthiness, their decisions may be more influenced by their trust perceptions. Keren’s studies support this, finding that the degree of trust-choice incompatibility is less robust if participants receive the trust question before the choice question than if they receive the choice question before the trust question.

In sum, Keren’s article highlights the complexity of decision-making. People are not always rational; to be effective, organizations will need to anticipate and account for this irrationality.

Positive Organizational Behavior

(Articles chosen and reviewed by Jessica Badger)

Positive psychology has been one of the fastest growing specialties in psychology in recent years. This movement towards focusing on the positive aspects of human behavior has influenced the I/O literature. The current special issue of the *Journal of Organizational Behavior* is devoted to positive OB (POB). Two particularly interesting articles in the issue provide a “point/counterpoint” on POB.


The authors argue that taking a positivist perspective can inform our research by leading to more in-depth inquiry, whereas taking a more negative perspective may lead to advocacy and less learning potential. Luthans and Avolio highlight several positive constructs in OB (e.g., creativity, wisdom, well-being, humor, spirituality, authenticity, and courage) that have not yet received considerable attention in the literature. Luthans and Avolio point out that research in OB has largely tended to be more negative that positive. Although POB has met considerable criticism in the OB field, focusing on these constructs may help broaden our research.


In the counterpoint article, Hackman acknowledges that the recent push towards POB is impressive, but he presents several potential problems in the POB research. Hackman argues that a great deal of OB already focuses on the positive (e.g., team cohesion and job satisfaction), so the push toward POB may not be warranted. Also, POB tends to focus on the individual level and neglect situational variables. These, and several other, concerns point out several conceptual methodological issues in POB research that should be addressed.

**SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH**

In this column, members of the department—students or faculty—share IO-related articles, books, or presentations that have peaked their interest and they have found worthy of disseminating. We hope to create a tradition of research dialogue among current and past members of the IO Psychology Program. We begin with two articles chosen and reviewed by Tessa Basford and Jessica Badger, first year students in the program.
JOIN US FOR DINNER AT SIOP!

Our program will be gathering for dinner on Friday, April 3rd, at 6pm, at the Red Fish Grill. Please contact Dr. Costanza at dcostanz@gwu.edu for details and to RSVP.

The conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology will be held this year April 2nd through April 5th, at the Sheraton in New Orleans. As usual, the GW IO Psychology program will have a significant presence. Here are some details about the posters and symposia authored by students and professors in our program (you can find the full reference on page 5). Hope to see you there!

Deares et al. (2009)

This study examined whether rater goals change based on target performance level. Results indicated that motivation goals were positively associated with target performance, while identifying weaknesses goals were negatively associated with target performance. There was an interaction between rater conscientiousness and target performance on identifying weaknesses goals and motivation goals.

Fraser et al. (2009)

Using a laboratory experiment, the current study examined the interactive effects of personality and structural interdependence on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) through OCB role definition. Results suggest that higher levels of structural interdependence in work settings increase the likelihood that employees will view OCB as in-role behaviors, thereby increasing the frequency with which employees engage in OCB.

Glenn-Dunleavy et al. (2009)

In the presentation, the researchers first assess the relative frequency of employment discrimination charges associated with contemporary (rather than traditional) forms of discrimination and the associated litigation outcomes. Second, they compare the relative prediction of litigation outcomes as a function of the conceptual framework provided by Sue and his colleagues (2007).

Graebner, Offermann, et al. (2009)

This paper explores connections between perceptions of virtual team processes and individual member outcomes. Findings show that the more competition and less participation team members perceived, the less they were satisfied with the virtual environment; satisfaction with the decision process mediated this relationship.

Matos, Lipari, & Friday (2009)

This study uses structural equation modeling to demonstrate that the experience of harassing or discriminatory behaviors reduces ratings of well-being, intentions to stay, coworker/supervisor satisfaction regardless of whether the targets identify those experiences as racial/ethnic harassment or discrimination.

(to be continued on page 5)

NEW ORLEANS: ADVENTURE IN THE CRESCENT CITY

Not sure what to do in New Orleans? If you’ve never been to New Orleans, then you can expect to experience a vibrant and fully pulsating city that is rich in centuries of colorful tradition, but not bound by the conventions of any single one. If you’re returning to New Orleans, then you are most likely anxious to head to the French Quarter and delight in the Café du Monde beignets and café au lait that you have been dreaming about in the days since you were last there.

New Orleans is sure not to disappoint. If there are only a handful of things that you can squeeze onto your “To Do” list while you’re there, be sure to treat yourself to a variety of traditional bayou favorites such as red beans and rice, jambalaya, gumbo, and crawfish. After a long day of conference sessions, soak up the sweet sounds of traditional New Orleans jazz by visiting one of several legendary venues – such as Preservation Hall. If you have an afternoon free, schedule a tour of the historic homes and gardens of the French Quarter. On the way, stop by Royal and Bourbon Streets to experience the historic hotels, view remarkable French and Spanish-influenced architecture, and the world famous restaurants. If you’re not faint of heart, then you may also want to consider taking a swamp tour of Louisiana’s scenic and uniquely beautiful bayou. If you’re looking for an experience even more exciting than viewing the fish, turtles, and wildlife, you can visit one of Louisiana’s many alligator farms where you can get up close and personal with the animals. But, please don’t be alarmed if your friends won’t join you!
GW AT SIOP 2009

(continued from page 4)

Offermann et al. (2009)
The Microaggressions team comprised of Dr. Lynn Offermann, Sumona Basu, Raluca Graebner, Salman Jaffer, & Tessa Basford will hold a symposium at SIOP looking at the nature of subtle discrimination in organizations. The research team will present the theory and taxonomy of microaggressions as applied to the workplace, and the scale it has developed to measure perceptions of microaggressions. In addition, Dr. Matthew Harrison from Manheim Corporate Services, Inc. will talk about his research on the detrimental impact of colorism—the notion that perceptions of skin color manifest themselves in the workplace. Dr. Kecia Thomas from the University of Georgia, a prominent researcher in the discrimination literature, will add her valuable insight as a discussant.

Shaw & Vasilopolous (2009)
To mitigate the negative impact of response distortions on personality assessment in faking conditions, a new measure is proposed and tested. Construct validity was supported and the effect size differences between honest and faking conditions of the new measure were much smaller than items on the NEO-IPPI.

2009 CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & POSTERS


Fraser, R., Dunleavy, D., Jensen, J., & Bauer, K. (2009, April). Is that my job? Setting the stage for OCB. To be presented at the 24th Annual Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.


Graebner, R., Offermann, L., Basu, S., Wirtz, P. Virtual Teams: Group Processes and Satisfaction with Virtual Interactions. To be presented at the 24th Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Jaffer, S., Basu, S., Graebner, R., Offermann, L., & Basford, T. What are Microaggressions?: Mapping the Construct Domain (2009). In L. Offermann (Chair), Sights, snubs, and slurs: Examining subtle forms of organizational discrimination. To be presented at the 24th Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.


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Hope you enjoyed the newsletter!
Wishing you a wonderful spring and summer.

Yours Sincerely,
08-09 Newsletter Editors
Raluca Graebner
Salman Jaffer

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