Welcome

Welcome back to the Department of Psychology? That’s right, we are welcoming you back and trying to better communicate and update you about what’s been going on in the Department of Psychology.

The Department continues to thrive with our vibrant and growing undergraduate major (we have about 600 majors compared to the 450 less than 5 years ago!), an Introduction to Psychology class that reaches about 70-80% of the entire undergraduate student body (almost 3000 students per year!), a Counseling doctoral program that has positioned itself to be appropriately recognized as one of the best in the nation based on top-tier scholarship, and of course, your I/O program that continues to thrive, excel, and be recognized nationally as one of the very best programs in the nation!

We are proud of our Psychology Department and it is my honor to begin my second term as Chair. Of course, our greatness begins and ends with the quality of the students that enter the UA Psychology community and the even more impressive quality of the students as they leave — we are proud of you and hope that you can find time in your busy schedules to visit us or at least drop us a line to let us know how you are doing and perhaps even to share a story or two about the “old days” and how the Psychology Department has affected your life and career.

Best always,
Paul E. Levy, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
Department of Psychology
Associate Director, Center for Organizational Research

By The Numbers—Our Program Today

The I/O Psychology department is currently housed on the 3rd floor of the College of Arts and Sciences building, newly built in 2002. This fall, we welcomed 6 students to the personnel program and 6 students to the MA/PhD program. Including the new cohort, a total of 51 students, 7 in the personnel program and 44 in the PhD program, work closely with 9 full time and supporting faculty. From 2001 to 2006, our faculty presented over 200 papers at national and regional scholarly meetings, published over 100 papers in refereed books and journals, and published 6 books. Our faculty also held editorships or editorial board memberships at 12 journals. In addition to faculty presentations and publications, Akron’s I/O students have been hard at work with at least 127 conference presentations and 37 journal and book chapter publications in that same time period. It takes students a median of 5 years to complete a PhD and most complete the personnel degree in 2 years. Between 2001 and 2006 students completed 38 master’s theses and 41 PhD dissertations. Eighteen personnel degrees were also granted in that time frame. In addition to conference presentations and journal publications, our students take an active role in the Center for Organizational Research (COR) and external industrial internships. This year, we have 7 students placed in internships at Organizational Effectiveness Strategies, Timken, and Shaker Consulting Group, among others. Our students, faculty, and alumni are to thank for the respect and consistent high rankings of Akron’s I/O psychology program.

*Statistics are based on a recently completed report which was part of a 5 year study. This fall we welcomed Dan Ilgen, visiting from Michigan State University, as an external reviewer for the study.

Inside this issue:

- Alumni Focus: Russ Johnson
- Brown Bag Series
- Faculty Focus: Jim Diependooff
- Meet the New Students
- 2008 SIOP Conference Presentations
- Alumni Newsletter Committee
In each issue we will highlight an alum to explore his/her life since graduate school. Russ Johnson, Ph.D. is the first person to be highlighted in the alumni focus section. We asked him the following questions—enjoy the responses!

What have you been up to since grad school? (work, family, etc.)

Thanks to the great training and mentoring I received at Akron, I was able to land a job at the University of South Florida, another top I/O program. I’m currently in my third year as an assistant professor, and am keeping myself busy researching and teaching in the areas of motivation, leadership, and organizational justice. I’m also enjoying the beaches and year-round rollerblading in sunny Tampa, minus the hurricanes!

What is your favorite memory from grad school? Least favorite?

Favorite memory: One of my favorite memories was during open house weekend when I first visited Akron. Being from Canada, I was feeling a little out of my element in Ohio until I met Bob Lord, who was sporting a Detroit Red Wings hockey jersey. At that point I decided Akron is the place where I would go for graduate training! As it turned out, the jersey may have just been a clever recruiting tactic because I only saw Bob wear that jersey one or two times over the next five years and whenever we talked about hockey he continually referenced hockey players who had retired many years ago (e.g., Gordie Howe).

Least favorite memory: Definitely my least favorite memory occurred during the first week after arriving in Akron in the summer of my first year. My classmates (Nate Sestak and Chris Clausen) and I had just moved into the top level of a house in a sketchy neighborhood. It was the third or fourth day and I was in the kitchen doing dishes when I heard a knock on the door. Being from Canada I walked to the door and immediately opened it without thinking to check who it might be. On the other side of the threshold stood a tall, burly man in a trench coat …holding a gun! The first four words out of his mouth were “Are you the Canadian?” Thinking I was about to be either robbed or deported, I began quickly devising a mental plan to get myself out of this looming mess. If memory serves, the plan involved disarming the stranger with a hockey stick that was leaning against the wall behind the door. Fortunately, before I had the opportunity to enact any ill-conceived plan, the stranger introduced himself as a detective with the homicide unit of the Akron police force. He then informed me that our neighbors downstairs were harboring fugitives from the law and proceeded to question me about them. As for the “Are you the Canadian?” question, he had made note of the license plates on my car, which were from Calgary, Alberta, Canada. In the end, I learned two very important lessons from this experience: (1) listen to current graduate students when they warn you about living in sketchy neighborhoods, and (2) lock the door and pretend you’re not home when someone who is packing heat comes knocking.

Continued on pg. 3
A Welcome from Rosalie Hall—I/O Program Chair

Greetings to all of you from our current I/O graduate students and faculty! As you enter this holiday season with its emphasis on old friends and new opportunities, we would like to share this newsletter with you and we hope that it brings both useful information and happy memories.

As Paul Levy indicated in his note from the department chair, the Psychology department and the I/O program in particular are doing well. Our current group of I/O faculty is strong and has diverse interests; it consists of Drs. Jim Diefendorff, Dennis Doverspike, Joelle Elicker, Paul Levy, Bob Lord, Aaron Schmidt, Andee Snell, Harvey Sterns and myself. Jim (Ph.D. from U of Akron) and Aaron (Ph.D. from Michigan State) are our newest members, they are both on track to receive tenure and promotions by the end of this academic year.

Last year many of you helped us out by completing a survey of our alumni intended as part of our five-year review process. Thank you for your responses. The review is going well, most recently we had our outside evaluation by Dr. Dan Ilgen of Michigan State, and received very positive feedback from him. Some of the information that we collected for this effort is shared with you in this newsletter, as well as additional information about our many exciting current activities. We wish you the best, and hope to see or hear from all of you soon, whether at SIOP or as you visit us on campus (our new building is a far cry from old Simmons Hall!).

Rosalie J. Hall
I/O Program Chair

Continued from pg. 2 —Alumni Focus: Russ Johnson, Ph.D.

What do you miss about grad school the most? Miss least?

Most: The thing I miss the most is the camaraderie that was shared among the grad students. When times were tough—struggling with theses and dissertations, studying for comps—it was reassuring to know that I wasn’t in the trenches alone. Whatever the situation, it never seemed so difficult after a grad student happy hour at 69 Taps, the Lime Spider, or the Winking Lizard. (A close second for what I miss most is the barrage of puns during class from the punmeister himself, Jeff Briks.)

Least: Definitely the paycheck! As an assistant professor, I still get to do all the things I really enjoyed as a grad student—conducting and advising research, teaching, attending conferences—except the pay is much higher. I’m happy to report that I no longer subsist on soda crackers and fountain water for lunch.

What’s the most exciting thing going on in your life right now?

My fiancée, Daisy Chang, would not forgive me if I failed to mention our upcoming wedding in New Zealand this summer (she’s also a graduate of the Akron program—have I mentioned the camaraderie among grad students?). After the wedding we are going on a whirlwind tour of Taiwan and possibly Hawaii. We also have five cats (Shatner, Oscar, Espresso, Frappaccino, and Kitten) running around our condo at the moment, which keeps us busy. So between Daisy, the five cats, and my thesis and dissertation students, my days are pretty much booked up nowadays.

Russ Johnson can be reached at rjohnson@cas.usf.edu

“WE WISH YOU THE BEST, AND HOPE TO SEE OR HEAR FROM ALL OF YOU SOON!”
~ROSALIE HALL, I/O PROGRAM CHAIR
Brown Bag Colloquia

The Industrial/Organizational program at The University of Akron is committed to providing forums where students and faculty can interact with one another while advancing personal knowledge and growth. One such forum is our Brown Bag series. On a near-weekly basis, the program proudly hosts a “Brown Bag” at which students and faculty gather for lunch and listen to a guest speaker discuss a topic related to their area of expertise. This ongoing tradition is a great way to explore the many ways scientific research can be used to build better organizations. As Nobel Prize winner, William Brag put it, “The important thing in science is not so much to obtain new facts as to discover new ways of thinking about them.”

The Fall 2008 series has been both impressive and enriching. It has filled our minds with new ideas and perspectives, while keeping us engaged with the larger I/O community. We would like to thank the Brown Bag Committee, the I/O Club Committee, attendees, and most importantly our distinguished speakers for making this all possible.

Recent Alumni, Faculty, & Student Brown Bag Presentations

Mike Horvath, Cleveland State University “Empirical and Conceptual Advancements in Recruitment Source Research”

Scott Highhouse, Bowling Green State University, “Implicit Beliefs about Employee Selection”

Chris Fluckinger & Matt Nordlund, The University of Akron, “Encouraging Accurate Responding: Instructions and Incentives”

Scott Goodman, Shaker Consulting Group, “What I Learned in Grad School…and What I Wish I’d Learned”

Winfred Arthur, Texas A&M, “Max Headroom Revisited: Intelligent Agents as Team Training Partners” (Hosted by I/O Club)

Linda Brown, “Developing a Coaching Practice: It’s Not About Giving Advice”


Tacy Byham, DDI, “Managerial Development”

Daan Stam, Visiting Scholar from Erasmus University Rotterdam, “Vision in Focus: The Role of Follower Self-Regulation in Visionary Leadership”

Megan Medvedoff, The University of Akron, “Leader Affective Displays During a Negative Work Event: Influences on Subordinate Appraisals, Affect, and Coping Strategies”

Call for Speakers

We are currently looking for alumni and special guests who would like to participate in future Brown Bag series. This is a great opportunity to see what is taking place within the Akron program and share your wealth of knowledge with students and faculty. If you are interested, please contact James Beck at jwb41@uakron.edu.
Faculty Focus: James Diefendorff, Ph.D.

Dr. James Diefendorff is the newest faculty member in the department and an alumnus of the University of Akron I/O Psychology PhD program.

After receiving his PhD from the program in 1999, he proceeded to hold faculty positions at two different universities. His first position was in the psychology department at Louisiana State University (1999-2004) followed by a faculty position at the business school at the University of Colorado at Denver (2004-2006).

Dr. Diefendorff then came back to the University of Akron as an assistant professor in August 2006 for the opportunity to work with the program’s faculty and great students. Since being here, he has also held an assistant professor of management position at Singapore Management University in the summer of 2007.

Currently, his research focuses are on emotional labor, work motivation, and workplace deviance. In his spare time outside of the department, he enjoys spending time playing with his two sons, Adam and Jacob. In the event that he has additional spare time beyond his sons, he enjoys exercising, playing guitar, and playing disc golf.

Meet the New Students

In the summer, our program welcomed 11 first year students, an eager bunch proud of their first year status.

From left to right (undergraduate/hometown):

Back row:
Allison Gabriel (The Pennsylvania State University / East Stroudsburg, PA)
Mary Margaret Harris (Washington and Lee University / Slidell, LA)
Blythe Gromelski (The University of Arizona / Canton, OH)
Alison Carr (Sweet Briar College / Bel Air, MD)
Stephen Hill (Hobart and Williams College / Rochester, NY)

Second row:
Jackie Carpenter (Elmira College / Moriah, NY)
Rachel Teo (National University of Singapore / Singapore)

Third row:
Faith Sheaffer-Thornberry (Kent State University / Hartville, OH)
Aimee King (University of Arkansas in Fayetteville / Fort Smith, AR)
Danielle Graham (Kent State University / Grafton, OH)

Front row:
Adam Hilliard (Butler University, Crown Point, IN)
SIOP 2008 Conference Presentations by Faculty Member

JAMES DIEFENDORFF –


DENNIS DOVERSPIKE –


JOELLE ELICKER –


"SPEAKING IN A SYMPOSIUM IS A TERRIFIC EXPERIENCE; IT’S A GREAT WAY TO NETWORK. ADMITTEDLY, I WAS QUITE NERVOUS MY FIRST TIME, BUT THE AUDIENCE WAS VERY SUPPORTIVE.”

~ALI O’MALLEY
5TH YEAR STUDENT
2008 SIOP Conference Presentations by Faculty Member (continued)

ROSALIE HALL

PAUL LEVY


ROBERT LORD


AARON SCHMIDT


Harvey Sterns
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

- Have any funny stories or memories from grad school? Share them with us! Our next newsletter will have a section devoted to “shout-outs” and “remember whens?” Also, if you have any suggestions for future issues, please let us know! Send the above information to: ioalumni@uakron.edu.

- What is going on in your lives now? As a way to put alumni in contact with each other, we would like to know what is going on. Let us know about your location, jobs, family life, etc. and we will publish it in our next newsletter.

- Don’t forget to check out our recently updated website to find information on I/O grad students, including research interests, social events, pictures from conferences, and recent publications. There is also an alumni contact page.

http://www.uakron.edu/groups/iopsychology/

The I/O Club put together the first annual Thanksgiving Food Basket Challenge between cohort years, faculty, and staff to bring in food baskets for the Akron/Canton Regional Food Bank. With everyone’s help, the department was able to make a donation of 80 food baskets to help those in need this holiday season! I/O Club member Allison Gabriel (left) and I/O Club President Charmane Harrison (right) are pictured above with two of the donated baskets.

Your Alumni Newsletter Committee

Co-Chairs
  - Katey Foster
  - Mary Margaret Harris
Website Committee Representative
  - Nicole Kohari
Brown Bag Committee Representative
  - Stephanie Shively
SIOP Committee Representative
  - Alison Carr
Members at Large
  - Allison Gabriel
  - Jackie Carpenter
Editors
  - Yoshie Nakai
  - Brodie Gregory
  - Ali O’Malley