A Note from the Editor

“I am so happy to share the Spring 2022 I/Opener with current students, faculty, and alumni. Please feel welcome to share the newsletter with your friends and family as well.

This semester, SPIOP held several in-person and virtual events. We held the second I/O Research Showcase, the Spring Beach Picnic, and the SIOP reception after a very long COVID-19 instigated hiatus. The other SPIOP officers and I were excited to hold in-person events to bring members together. We hope that it continues to be safe to hold in-person events in future semesters.

Many SPIOP members have expressed their excitement and gratitude for the opportunity to attend SIOP 2022. We are very thankful to the Student Government Association for their financial support. We are also very thankful for our alumni donors for making the I/O Networking Knight possible. Many members expressed that the networking event was their favorite part of the conference, and I personally enjoyed networking with program alumni.

Finally, I want to thank all of the students who makes substantial extra-role contributions. Service to the I/O program helps establish a true community, and I would be thrilled to see program traditions carried long beyond Spring 2022.”

Michael J. DiStaso, M.S.
Chief Editor
Recent PhD Graduates

Alyssa Perez

Dissertation: “Creativity as a resource: How creativity influences the appraisal of work stressors and subsequent strain”

Advisor: Dr. Steve Jex

Employment: Manager of Exam Development and Administration at Massachusetts Trial Court

Nikki Perrotta

Dissertation: “Resources and racism: An examination of a dual-pathway model of economic stress and workplace prejudice and discrimination”

Advisor: Dr. Mindy Shoss

Employment: Senior Consultant at APTMetrics
2021 Publications


2021 Publications


Bold denotes SPIOP members; underline denotes I/O program faculty
2021 Presentations


**Ciarlante, K., & Shoss, M. K.** (2020, August). *Predicting employee engagement in low and high severity counterproductive work behavior.* Paper presented at the annual conference of the Academy of Management.


**Horan, K.A., Rivera, M., Murillo-Gomez, M.** (2021, November). *Applying a healthy work design perspective to understand hospitality employees’ public ratings of their organization.* Poster presented at the semi-annual conference of Work, Stress, and Health.
2021 Presentations


Bold denotes SPIOP members; underline denotes I/O program faculty
2021 Presentations


SIOP 2022 Presentations

**Poster Presentations**


SIOP 2022 Presentations

Poster Presentations

Cui, C., Baz, G., & Ehrhart, M. (2022, April). Predicting Burnout from Supervisor-Subordinate Agreement about Resources.


Schlotzhauer, A. E. & Ehrhart, M. G. (2022, April). The inherent femininity of perceived supervisor support and its implications.

Symposium Presentations


Wheeler Nakahara

“At P&G, my main tasks involve supporting the surveys that are administered to employees, as well as some general I/O consulting tasks (e.g., providing feedback on different business practices such as training). It has been an incredible learning experience so far. In general, I have been able to see how I/O topics are applied in practice. I have also had the opportunity to learn more data visualization programs such as Power BI, as well as Qualtrics’ dashboard system (and their text analysis software!). Since I am still relatively new, I can share some tips that have helped me get adjusted to my role. Don’t be afraid to ask questions and make sure to meet lots of people who work in the company, even if they aren’t on your team. It is always great to make connections with people in our field, even if you don’t directly work with them. You never know if their expertise could be beneficial to a future project. Also, if you work at a large company, it can take time to learn the org hierarchy, and meeting new people can help you understand what teams or business units people belong to, and how they interact with each other. Another thing I have learned is that translating science to practice is important. Even though some companies have a lot of I/Os, you don’t always work with them. Getting in the habit of explaining what you do with those who don’t know about our field is important to show how our skills and training add value. Again, I have only been working for a little over a month, but I would be happy to talk about my experience with anyone who is interested!”

Alissa Gebben and Charlotte Holden

Charlotte and Alissa are both I/O consultants at AE Strategies, a federal contracting firm based in the DMV (D.C.-Maryland-Virginia) area. Charlotte has been at AE since November 2020 and helped to recruit Alissa last fall (which speaks to the importance of networking and making connections!).

“A nice thing about working as external consultants is that the projects can vary drastically with regard to what knowledge, skills, and abilities are required to perform effectively so no two projects are the same, so it definitely doesn’t get boring. We have worked together on a couple contracts, including an engagement survey development project where they have leveraged core I/O skills. Charlotte has also worked on building an internal credentialing exam for HR specialists, and Alissa’s main contract right now is focused on DE&I (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) program evaluation.

Something that was a bit of a shock stepping out of the cocoon of grad school, where you’re surrounded by people who are likely to think similarly to you on a given topic, is that that isn’t the case in the ‘real world’. Clients or teams of people you work with will have different expertise, different backgrounds, and different ways of approaching topics that may not align with how an I/O would approach a topic, so it’s incredibly important to learn how to communicate what we as I/Os. We add a lot of value, and we need communicate it in a way that is approachable and digestible. Not everyone wants to discuss construct validity in a team meeting, so breaking down complex concepts in a way that anyone can understand is an incredibly important skill to develop (Alissa really found that teaching helped in this regard!).”
Teaching Reflections

Colleen Cui taught Social Psychology, in a face-to-face format, in Fall 2021. She had 74 students in total, who were from many different majors and backgrounds, and they had a very interactive and energetic class. She described it as one of her favorite experiences of grad school.

How to facilitate learning via social interaction

“At the very beginning of the semester, many students weren’t comfortable speaking up yet. Therefore, when I posed discussion questions, I often divided the class into small groups so students could share ideas with each other without having to address the entire class. I also sometimes asked students complete an individual activity using a class concept by themselves first, and then divided them up into small groups for them to share what they wrote with their group members. The students got to know their classmates and feel comfortable around them, which I believe helped with larger class discussions later. One time later, I had scheduled 20 minutes for a class discussion on a particular topic, but we went over time. I had to say, “I’m only taking 2 more people!” because there were more who still had their hands up and wanted to speak.”

Dealing with nerves

“Remember that students are generally kind people. They are not there to judge you! If you fumble over your words in lecture one day, they will not think less of you. In fact, they will find that relatable! Relatability is key in keeping students engaged. Try to make your examples as relatable as possible, too. Many of my students said that the examples that I had in lecture were relatable to their own lives and experiences, which helped them learn the concepts and stay entertained.

Still, it is still important to make sure students do know the difference between research findings and their own experience. This was a piece of valuable advice that my advisor, Dr. Fritzsche, gave me. Sometimes students will have personal experiences counter to what research finds, and they might think “well I haven’t experienced it, so it isn’t true!”. I made it a point to always emphasize that the results we learned about were true in general, on average, and that anecdotal experiences are not strong evidence for psychological phenomena.”
Teaching Reflections

Matthew Ng recently taught Organizational Psychology, in a face-to-face format, to about 27 students. Overall, he described it as a great experience.

**Overall thoughts**

“Teaching confirmed my suspicions that I wanted to go into an academic role, and it was nice to see the impact you can have on such a short time horizon. In grad school, we spend so much time learning all about things we don’t know, it can be really easy to forget just how insulated we are from a more general population. Not to disparage undergraduate knowledge, but teaching really puts into perspective how much you have learned since you were an undergraduate. Teaching for me, was a great way to review topics I hadn’t touched in some time (through actually reading a textbook and preparing lectures), which will hopefully come in handy when I take my comprehensive exams this year.”

**Tips for upcoming instructors-of-record**

“Be comfortable with flexibility. As much as we try to be as prepared as possible for every situation, chances are, something will happen during the semester that you don’t have an explicit policy for in your syllabus. That’s okay! For me, I tried to handle every situation as fairly as possible and I made sure that sentiment was present in all aspects of my class by incorporating feedback surveys (mid-semester, but also other time points that make sense based on your course schedule), incorporating feedback on assessments themselves (I was really nervous about this, but students did not abuse this when I incorporated a “Did you think any questions were unfair? Why?” on my exam), and icebreakers (I asked students in the beginning of the class about what their biggest college class pet peeve is and made some minor changes to accommodate when it was feasible). Students seem to appreciate and respect the acknowledgement.”
Teaching Reflections

Alissa Gebben taught Introduction to I/O Psychology, in a face-to-face format, in Fall 2021. Her class was 3 hours long, which left lots of time during each session. She decided to structure the class by starting with an hour-long lecture and followed that with an in-class group activity.

Starting with a question

“One thing that I think was a big success was that I made sure to open up every class period with a broad question to stimulate their thoughts on whatever topic we were covering that day (‘What is a job?’, ‘What things stress you out at work?’, ‘What makes a good leader?’), and I wrote down their answers on the board. More often than not, they do hint at the concepts and phenomena that we discuss in I/O, so whenever the lecture touched on something that they had mentioned in response to the opening question, I made sure to reinforce that they had these same ideas, but now they have the proper terminology to discuss these things.”

Focus on application

“My absolute favorite part about teaching was generally seeing the way that students apply the concepts that they learned in class. This got easier for them in latter half of the class when they had a good foundation of I/O concepts, and a lot of the in-class activities involved acting as a consultant team to solve a given organizational issue, like motivation or turnover. Overall, I really enjoyed teaching, as well as helping the students learn and see the positive ways in which I/Os can impact people at work!”

SPIOP secures approximately $30,000 each year from UCF’s Student Government Association for our members to attend the annual SIOP conference. In addition, SPIOP hosts numerous events such as the Fall Reunion, the Spring welcome-back picnic, monthly general body meetings, student and alumni panels, the I/O Research Showcase, and, of course, the annual SIOP reception. However, SPIOP simply cannot succeed without your generous support! Please scan the QR code or click this link to donate.
Colby Kopf

“My favorite part of the SIOP 2022 conference was the UCF Reception. This was a great opportunity to network with incumbent graduate students, alumni, and faculty from both the Psychology and Business departments. The connections that I have forged through SPIOP, especially as a non-traditional student, have helped me to grow as a future I/O psychologist. Through SPIOP, I have been able to discuss cutting-edge research with some of the students that are conducting it. Thanks to SPIOP, I was able to find a research assistant position on campus, allowing me to work closely with graduate students and faculty. SPIOP has truly been foundational to my undergraduate experience.”

Mayleen Gonzalez

“During my time at SIOP 2022, I had the opportunity to present my research and network with various students as well as faculty which has helped me grow professionally. My favorite aspect of this conference is the experience of attending the sessions that provide me with invaluable knowledge about various I/O topics and learning about how individuals began in the I/O field. Hearing everyone’s different stories and diverse research interests was quite an inspirational moment as I move forward in my studies and consider different topics I would like to delve into. After graduation, I will be attending the University of North Carolina-Charlotte’s Organizational Science Ph.D. program. Looking forward to next year’s SIOP.”

Giselle Chaviano

“Thanks to SPIOP and the SEE lab, I’ve been able to present at research conferences such as Florida Undergraduate Research Conference and UCF’s Student Scholar Symposium. I have met amazing graduate students who have given me advice on how to succeed beyond undergrad, including CV and GRE preparation. SPIOP also gave me the opportunity to learn about the SIOP conference, which I attended for the first time this year. At the conference, I was able to network with other grad students and meet individuals who are currently working in the field to get a better understanding of different career opportunities I may have in the future!”
Undergraduate Spotlight

Iggy Azcarate

“SPIOP was helpful in holding multiple workshops where students could learn skills about applying to grad school, making a resume, and most importantly networking. I was able to meet a lot of people through SPIOP that ended up being great friends and in a way felt like small scale networking.

My favorite part of the SIOP 2022 conference was presenting my research at a poster session and getting to talk about it with people from the industry as well as other academics. It really validated that I learned a lot from my experience and was able to effectively communicate it.

I am graduating this semester, I am taking a gap year to gain some real work experience before applying to a PhD program.”

Angela Le

“Throughout 3+ years, I have been able to create and present posters at various conferences, network with professors and other I/O students, and get hands-on experiences with statistical and survey platforms beyond the classroom, among other invaluable experiences that allow me to be immersed in this field and develop skills for further education or industry jobs. Upon graduation, I will be working at Molson Coors Beverage Company as a Learning Associate in the Leadership & Development branch of the Human Resources department to work on training materials and DE&I initiatives.”

Sydney Mazur

“I joined SPIOP in Fall 2021, and it has been an amazing experience. Attending SIOP 2022 allowed me to interact with other like-minded students pursuing I/O Psychology! If it weren’t for my mentor, Michael, and SPIOP, I never would have gone to SIOP. I am excited to continue being a part of this community in the upcoming semesters!”
“After I graduated, I worked as an Instructional Specialist at UCF’s Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, where I met my wonderful husband, Eric. While it was great to have an impact for students through the pedagogy they receive across the university, my heart has always been with teaching, so I accepted a position as an Associate Professor of Management at Lynn University in Boca Raton, FL. But, I am a knight at heart, and my husband was still in Orlando, so I continued to adjunct at UCF until a full-time position became available, and here I am again! On a personal level, I have expanded my interests and hobbies to include mountain biking, roller blading, running, cosplay, barre, and painting. In other words, yes...after you finish your program, you do recover enough and have enough time to pick hobbies back up.”

WELCOME BACK! WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ABOUT BEING BACK?
“Thank you! I think it’s easier to say there’s nothing I’m not looking forward to! UCF is such a fantastic institution. There is an opportunity for the members of this community to explore development in any area that they desire. When I came here as a student in the I/O PhD program, I was so busy with the program that I didn’t really get a chance to appreciate all that UCF has to offer. Like I said, whatever someone may be interested in, UCF offers an opportunity to explore it and experience it. But if I had to say one thing it would be finally being a full-time part of the management department, working with scholars that I have long admired, and with students that are among the top in the nation.”

WHICH COURSES DO YOU MOST ENJOY TEACHING?
“The courses I most enjoy are leadership, organizational behavior, and conflict resolution and negotiation. These are courses in which students have to apply the material to themselves personally in order to master the knowledge and skills, and they come out transformed with a much deeper understanding of themselves, the material, and the behavior of others, and that is a beautiful experience for me.”
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Alum Spotlight

Amanda Main, Ph.D. - Spring 2017

WHAT WAS THE ADJUSTMENT LIKE BETWEEN YOUR PREVIOUS INSTITUTION AND UCF?

“Lynn is a teaching-focused school, and so my primary responsibilities were in the classroom, where I would sometimes teach up to 12 classes per semester. They were much smaller than what we see here at UCF, with my absolute largest being 30 students, but averaging around 8-11 students per course. It gave me an opportunity to get to know my students on a more personal level, which was nice. Much of my work focused on helping students build businesses from ideation to ready-to-launch in 8-week sections. It was exciting and innovative, but as I mentioned before, I was always a Knight at heart. I love UCF’s culture, its resilient spirit, and the ability to have such a large-scale impact. Even though I have more students per semester here (about 1,000 currently), I teach fewer classes (2 currently), and so I find that I am better able to dedicate more time and resources into each of those courses and the student experiences in them.”

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR STUDENTS WHO WANT TO EVENTUALLY WORK IN A BUSINESS SCHOOL OR JUST STUDENTS INTERESTED IN BUSINESS?

“Sure, here are a few first steps:

• Join the Academy of Management and start submitting to and attending their conferences.

• Read The Wall Street Journal. In business, you always need to know what is currently happening because changes take place so quickly that have ripple effects that you need to be aware of.

• Take some electives at the College of Business in the Management Department. That will get you familiar with some of the differences in the nomenclature that is used between the two disciplines.

• Come to events at the College of Business. The Exchange is constantly hosting events with speakers from across the business world on a variety of topics. It’s an easy way to get free information and to really get a feel for whether this field is a good fit for you without having to make a commitment.

• Read up on strategic management. I/O psychology has a very micro-focus; studying strategy will give you the macro-focus that you need to have a well-rounded understanding of the business world.

• Network, network, network. While this is important in I/O, it is mainly researchers that you are focusing on networking with. For business, you want to network with people in large organizations. If networking is not your strong suit, I’m happy to do a workshop for your program on the tips and tricks of networking like a pro! It is a helpful skill regardless of where you end up!”
WHAT DO YOU KNOW NOW, THAT YOU WISH YOU KNEW IN GRAD SCHOOL?
“Something that would have been super helpful to know when I was back in school was that when you graduate and land your first job you aren’t expected to know everything from day one. You will be constantly learning and asking questions probably up until your first complete year of working. Also, never be afraid to reach out and ask questions as most of the time your colleagues appreciate that you’re coming to them or someone else had the same question.”

ANY ADVICE FOR CURRENT GRADUATE STUDENTS?
“I would say a huge thing is to get involved and apply to different types of internships regardless of whether you are thesis or non-thesis. Thankfully I work in the field that I wanted to end up in, training and development, but you don’t really know what you want to do until you’ve got firsthand experience.”

Thank you to our alumni for continuously sharing your experiences with the UCF I/O program. Your experiences as both graduate students and I/O psychologists are invaluable, and we truly appreciate your willingness to share them with us and help shape the next generation of I/Os!
2021 Highlights
2021 Highlights
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