



Cleveland State University

*2007 Assessment Report*

**Assessment Report  
Consumer-Industrial Research Program  
Department of Psychology  
May 2007**

Introduction

The Consumer-Industrial Program (CIRP) is quite unique, the only one in the USA. This is the only Masters level program combining Consumer Psychology with Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology and offering this mix with a strong professional orientation. Students predominately have undergraduate degrees in psychology, although more than a few have had bachelor degrees in other disciplines, particularly in business. A few, in fact, held MBA degrees prior to applying to CIRP.

The first year of the Program is composed of core conceptual and methodological courses. The second year is devoted to the thesis and to the remaining elective and core courses. Further, during the second year students are encouraged to take part in an internship in a business setting relevant to one's primary interest (Consumer/marketing or I/O research). While students can complete the Program in two years, most need an additional semester (or more) to complete the thesis and the 43 credits required for the Program.

The Program's principal focus is upon training the graduate students to conduct research in business settings, to generate research that is valid, accurate, and useable by the organization in question. Accordingly, a premium is placed upon close contact between faculty and students in the conduct of research. Such research activities include not only the thesis but also independent studies. Due to the small number of faculty involved (1.50-2.0 FTE, to date) the necessity for close faculty-student contact makes it necessary to restrict the number of students to between 7-11 each year, despite the fact that over the years the Program has rejected considerably more applicants than it accepted.

During the 2006-2007 AY, the department launched a search for a new tenure track faculty member for the Program. With the hiring of Dr. M. Horvath, the search was successful. Further, two additional faculty currently on staff (Drs. E. Park and A. F. Smith) have elected to participate more fully in Program direction and in thesis supervision. With these changes, a reanalysis of the objectives and procedures of the Program has begun.

With the additional faculty participation, the knowledge and experience of Program faculty has changed rather greatly. Previously, the Program was able to focus about equally upon Consumer psychology (the responsibility of Dr. Blake) and Industrial psychology (the domain of Dr. Bowen). Thanks to the inputs of Dr. Bowen, students were provided also with training in Organizational psychology, a professional area in which Dr. Bowen was trained, but is outside her central focus. Methodologically, survey procedures are the forte of both Drs. Blake and Bowen, although both have skills in



laboratory experimentation. Indeed, as a team, they have an extensive publication record of applied research in organizational settings. Consequently, survey rather than experimental design has been emphasized in thesis and independent research.

With the additional faculty, however, the Program now has the inputs of faculty who concentrate more upon lab experimentation (Drs. Park and Smith). Thus, students now have at their disposal a more comprehensive arsenal of research methods. Further, Dr. Horvath's skill is in the Organizational psychology arena, while Dr. Park's thrust is, within the Social psychology realm, on group/ organization processes. Thus, the "missing" area of Organizational theory and applications is now covered.

The appearance of the additional faculty resources, along with the expansion of the existent research Programs of Drs. Blake and Bowen, makes it appropriate to reassess the scope of courses offered in the Program. Further, a far reaching analysis of the Program undertaken in Spring 2007 by the four current faculty has suggested a number of structural improvements for the Program ( some described below).

A systematic review by CIRP- PC faculty was begun in May 2007 and will continue into the 2007 Summer semester and after a brief hiatus will resume in September 2007 with the arrival of Dr. Horvath.

Several important changes were made in the structure of the CIRP program during the May 2007 program review (as noted, the review is continuing into the Summer semester). These changes were made as an outcome of the faculty review of the program evaluation described below.

- a) The portfolio procedure is being reorganized for greater efficiency. First, the student will submit his/her portfolio at the beginning of the second semester (Spring), third (Fall), and fourth (Spring) semesters. Second, the portfolio will be submitted to the Program Director rather than to the student's mentor. The Director will be responsible for monitoring the submission of the portfolios. Third, the Director will distribute all portfolios to each faculty member to review. Fourth, after faculty review of portfolios (along with other information about the student's performance in each course taken, in thesis research [as applicable], and in other areas, e.g., independent potentially publishable research), the faculty will determine the appropriate mentoring advice for each student. This will be repeated each semester.
- b) A systematic mentoring program is being initiated. At the beginning of the student's first semester (Fall), a "temporary mentor" will be appointed for each student. This temporary mentor will help in the selection of courses and in the adjustment to the graduate school environment. The student will then select a "thesis mentor" who will direct the thesis, advise the student on graduate program requirements, assist in the student's securing a temporary/part time professional position and/or internship, and serve as a source of information on doctoral program admission/job search. The thesis mentor may or may not be the same as the temporary mentor.

After each student's portfolio and performance has been reviewed by the CIRP- PC, one of the CIRP faculty who is not the temporary or thesis mentor will discuss the faculty's suggestions/recommendations with a student.



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- c) Both temporary and thesis mentor will proactively emphasize to the student the need to secure an internship and to become involved in research in addition to the thesis.

#### Program Goals

While the specifics of the Program's goals are presented subsequently via tabular format, let it be noted here that the Program's goals are reviewed by the Program Committee each year. Since this is a small Program and since a major focus is upon preparation of students for professional positions, it is necessary to reconsider the Program's goals each year to ensure that those are appropriate to changing businesses and professional conditions. As noted above, in Spring 2007 a major reassessment has been launched. The restructuring, however, cannot be completed until Dr. Horvath's arrival in the Fall 2007 semester.

The set of six goals currently operative have been in existence for well over a decade. However, the specific knowledge and skills that compose a goal are updated each year. For example, for Goal No.3 (knowledge of the principle statistical techniques employed in the Consumer-I/O realm) the list of specific statistics included is reviewed and revised as necessary each year.

The review of Goal 5 merits notice. The objective of the Program was refined to specify that all graduates need to develop the ability to do theoretical research, not simply professional problem solving research. Thus, the Program has set a higher standard for all students to meet. Evaluation against this higher standard will be gauged by performance on the Masters thesis, or by independent research resulting in a conference paper or, at least, a paper judged by faculty to be of publishable quality. Performance in regard to problem solving research will be discernable by activities in specific courses, particularly in PSY 597/696, PSY 512 and PSY 620.



## List of Program Goals

<b>Department or Unit Name:</b>	Psychology
<b>Individual Completing Form:</b>	Brian F. Blake, Ph.D.
<b>Date:</b>	31-May-07

<b>Program Name:</b>	<b>Consumer Industrial Research Program</b>
Goal 1:	Students will develop knowledge of key theoretical concepts in Consumer Psychology and I/O Psychology. The core areas include: personnel psych., job analysis and performance management, organizational psych, and consumer psych.
Goal 2:	Students will develop knowledge of the principal quantitative and qualitative methodologies in Consumer and I/O Psychology, including survey design, questionnaire preparation, and allied procedures.
Goal 3:	Students will be conversant with the principal univariate and multivariate statistical techniques employed in the I/O and Consumer psychology fields.
Goal 4:	Students will be able to make a formal presentation of original work in a style and form that is up to professional standards.
Goal 5:	Students will develop an ability to conduct original research of a basic theory testing nature.
Goal 6:	After the completion of their program, students will be prepared for professional jobs in the Consumer/I/O arena or for continuation of their studies in a graduate program.



<b>Program:</b> <u>Consumer Industrial Research Program</u>	<b>Completed By:</b> <u>Brian F. Blake</u>
<b>Department:</b> <u>Psychology</u>	<b>Date:</b> <u>31-May-07</u>

**Goal 1:** Students will develop knowledge of key theoretical concepts in Consumer Psych. and I/O Psych. The core areas include: personnel psych., job analysis and performance management, organizational psych, and consumer psych.

Outcomes	Research Methods	Findings	Review	Actions
#1-Students in the I/O track must complete 16 hrs. of I/O courses covering the core I/O areas offered by Psy Dept. as well as 8 hrs. of Consumer Psy. Students in the Consumer track must complete 8 hrs. of I/O courses, 8 hrs. of Consumer Psy. in the Psy. Dept. and 8 hrs. of relevant courses offered in the Psychology, Marketing, Communications, or other relevant departments.	As the only program in the nation offering an integration of I/O and Consumer Psych., CIRP is unique. However, comparisons were made between CIRP and similar institutions elsewhere. These include Masters level programs offered in psychology, marketing, and marketing research realms.	Curriculum requirements have been found to be comparable to or exceed those of most other universities, particularly in methodology courses.	The CIRP Program Committee, CIRP- PC, has discussed findings.	Requirements have been retained.
#2-Courses in the above must be completed with a grade of B or better.	Transcripts of 2006-2007 graduates were reviewed.	Graduates met the requirements. However, one current student received a B-grade and was judged by the faculty to be making unsatisfactory progress.	The CIRP- PC has discussed these findings.	The current student was counseled out of the program.



<p>#3-Each student will maintain a portfolio of products produced in CIRP. Included will be one product (e.g. term paper, research report, data analysis package) from each core course as well as published research reports, conference papers, and other indicators of professional performance. The portfolio will be prepared in a format such it can be employed: a) for program assessment by CIRP- PC; b) for job interviewing by the student, and c) for evaluation of a student's progress (and subsequent feedback to the student) by a student's mentor.</p>	<p>In April 2007, students in the 2006 were queried about their understanding and expectations of the portfolio procedure.</p>	<p>Pervasive misinformation was found to exist among students about the portfolio requirements.</p>	<p>The CIRP- PC has discussed the results.</p>	<p>It was decided to change the structure of the portfolio procedure: 1) The portfolio (such as it is at a particular point in time) will be submitted at the beginning of the second (Spring), third (Fall), and fourth (Spring) semester rather than at the completion of the Program; 2) The portfolio will be submitted to the Program Director who will monitor its timely completion by each student; 3) The portfolio will be reviewed by Program faculty and this review will be a component of the formal mentoring session to be held with each first year student.</p>
<p>#4-Program graduates will find the materials in the above courses relevant to their work or for further graduate training in the field.</p>	<p>It had previously been decided that program graduates would be surveyed every 4 yrs. Due to the minimal resources available for an alumni survey and the small number of graduates each year, this policy was reconsidered. The suggestion (from the Office of Assessment) that CIRP adopt an exit interview policy was considered.</p>	<p>It was concluded that such a survey would be beyond the resources of the Program. It was also concluded that the previously agreed upon exit interview procedure was not effectively implemented in 2006-2007.</p>	<p>The suggestion that CIRP adopt an exit interview policy was reviewed.</p>	<p>It was reiterated that each graduate would participate at the time of graduation in an exit interview conducted by that person's thesis mentor. It was also decided to await the necessary resources for the conduct of a full alumni survey.</p>



**Goal 2:** Students will develop a knowledge of the principal quantitative and qualitative research methodologies in Consumer and I/O Psychology, including survey design, questionnaire preparation, and allied procedures.

Outcomes	Research Methods	Findings	Review	Actions
#1-Students will complete a minimum of one 4 credit course in survey design/questionnaire preparation, with the option of additional courses in content analysis, market research management, focus group methodology, and other such methodology courses.	As the only program in the nation offering an integration of I/O and Consumer psych., CIRP is unique. However, comparisons were made between CIRP and similar programs elsewhere.	Requirements were found to meet or exceed those of other programs in psychology and marketing departments. The methodology sequence found in the few marketing research programs available in the United States is equal to or greater than that of CIRP, the marketing research program courses, though, do not include an I/O component with its attention to research techniques useful in personnel and organizational research.	The CIRP-PC has discussed findings.	No action necessary.
#2-Courses in the area must be completed with a grade of B or better.	Transcripts of 2007 graduates were reviewed.	All graduates have completed course work with a grade of B or better in every course.	The CIRP- PC has discussed findings.	No action necessary.
#3-Program graduates will find curriculum provided knowledge relevant to work or further graduate training in the field.	It has previously been decided that Program graduates would be surveyed every four years. Due to minimal resources available for an alumni survey and the small number of graduates each year, this policy was reconsidered.	It was concluded that such a survey would be beyond the resources of the Program. It was also concluded that the previously agreed upon exit interview procedure was not effectively implemented in AY 2006-2007.	The suggestion (from the Office of Assessment) that CIRP adopt an exit interview policy was considered.	It was reiterated that each graduate would participate at the time of graduation in an exit interview conducted by that person's thesis mentor.



<p><b>#4</b>-As noted under Goal #1, students will maintain a work portfolio. Included in it will be a survey design and a completed questionnaire.</p>	<p>(Same as Goal 1 #3)</p>	<p>(Same as Goal 1 #3)</p>	<p>(Same as Goal 1 #3)</p>	<p>(Same as Goal 1 #3)</p>
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**Goal 3:** Students will be conversant with the principal univariate and multivariate statistical techniques employed in the I/O and Consumer Psychology fields.

Outcomes	Research Methods	Findings	Review	Actions
#1-Students must complete at least 8 semester hrs. of coursework in statistical analysis.	As the only program in the nation offering an integration of I/O and Consumer psych., CIRP is unique. However, comparisons were made between CIRP and similar programs elsewhere.  Also, a review of the statistical skills required of CIRP graduates was conducted by CIRP-PC based partly on phone discussions with key local graduates.	Curriculum requirements have been found to be comparable to or exceed those of most other universities, particularly in methodology courses.  Also, it was concluded that the CIRP students need, and are capable of understanding, a more intensive introduction to computer packages (notably SPSS) than is provided in the current univariate statistics course taken by CIRP students.	The CIRP-PC has discussed findings.	No action is necessary on the 8 hour requirement.  An arrangement was made with the Psychology Department that a second section of the graduate univariate statistics course would be offered that includes the SPSS package and would be taught by a CIRP faculty member (Dr. Bowen).
#2-Courses in the area must be completed with a grade of B or better.	Transcripts of the 2007 graduates were reviewed.	All graduates have completed course work with a grade of B or better in every course.	The CIRP-PC has discussed findings.	No action necessary.
#3-Program graduates will find curriculum provided knowledge relevant to work or further graduate training in the field.	It has previously been decided that Program graduates would be surveyed every four years. Due to minimal resources available for an alumni survey and the small number of graduates each year, this policy was reconsidered.	It was concluded that such a survey would be beyond the resources of the Program.	The suggestion (from the Office of Assessment) that CIRP adopt an exit interview policy was considered.	It was reiterated that each graduate would participate at the time of graduation in an exit interview conducted by that student's thesis mentor. It was also decided to await the necessary resources before conducting such a survey.



<p><b>#4</b>-In the aforementioned portfolio maintained by a student will be a major product from each core statistical course (Psy 511, Psy 512, Com 531 or Psy 611).</p>	<p>As noted earlier, students in the 2007 class were queried about the portfolio procedure.</p>	<p>As noted above, the students were misinformed about the portfolio procedure.</p>	<p>The CIRP-PC has discussed findings.</p>	<p>It was decided to change the structure of the portfolio procedure: 1) The portfolio (such as it is at a particular point in time) will be submitted at the beginning of the second (Spring), third (Fall), and fourth (Spring) semester rather than at the completion of the Program; 2) The portfolio will be submitted to the Program Director who will monitor its timely completion by each student; 3) The portfolio will be reviewed by Program faculty and this review will be a component of the formal mentoring session to be held with each first year student.</p>
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**Goal 4:** Students will be able to make a formal presentation of original work in a style and form up to professional standards. Students will demonstrate these presentational skills in both the I/O and the Consumer Psychology areas.

Outcomes	Research Methods	Findings	Review	Actions
<p><b>#1-</b>Students will make at least one formal presentation (with audio-visual tools meeting current professional standards) on an original I/O and on an original Consumer project. The presentation will be to a professional audience (e.g., at a conference) or to an audience of interested faculty/students, or to other students in a course requiring or making possible such a presentation.</p>	<p>Presentations by students in the AY 2006-2007 were reviewed by one or more CIRP-PC members in regard to clarity, professional tenor, substance, and inclusion of suitable audio-visual technology.</p>	<p>The student presentations reviewed were found to be satisfactory. In fact, three students and several CIRP graduates made poster presentations in the 2006 COS research conference. However, it was found that most students in the 2007 class had not made a conference presentation or a presentation to an audience of interested faculty-students outside of class.</p>	<p>The CIRP- PC discussed the policy.</p>	<p>It was decided that students needed more encouragement to make such a presentation to a professional conference. In addition, once again students will be required to include print versions of the I/O and the consumer presentations in the portfolio.</p>



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**Goal 5:** Students will develop an ability to conduct original research, either of a basic theory testing or of a professional problem solving nature.

Outcomes	Research Methods	Findings	Review	Actions
#1-Students will conduct and prepare a written report of an original research project ; preferably the project will be of a basic theory testing variety. The research will then be presented to a panel of three or more experts in the field.	Theses completed in the 2006-2007 year were reviewed. Also student presentations (see goal 4) were assessed by one or more CIRP- PC members.	The completed theses and the conference papers were found to be of high quality. It was also observed that the number of students completing a thesis within the two yr. time period was declining. Students are taking longer to complete their research.	The CIRP- PC has discussed findings.	It was decided to more strongly encourage independent research beyond/ in addition to the thesis.



**Goal 6:** After completion of the CIRP, students will be prepared to assume professional jobs in the consumer/I/O research arena or for continuation of studies in a graduate program.

Outcomes	Research Methods	Findings	Review	Actions
<p>#1-a) At least 50% of the graduates seeking full time employment will have obtained jobs in an area relevant to their training.</p> <p>b) At least 50% of the graduates seeking additional graduate training will have been accepted into such a program.</p>	<p>The present employment of students graduating in the last two years was found via direct contact or indirectly through reports of fellow students.</p>	<p>The employment (current or subsequent to graduation) of the majority of graduates in the last two years was found.</p>	<p>Over 80% of those with known circumstances were reported to have secured appropriate professional employment or to be enrolled in doctoral studies.</p>	<p>It was decided that the preparation level of graduates was satisfactory at the program level.</p>