



# Minnesota Professionals for Psychology Applied to Work

## Upcoming Speaker

By Marcia Sytsma, VP Programs

### Thursday, Feb. 17: Meeting the Needs of the Business and Producing Publishable Research: Challenges and Opportunities

**Ann Marie Ryan, Professor, Michigan State University**



This month marks another exciting opportunity to think about how we can bring together applied research and helping our customers solve organizational problems. Our presenter, Professor Ann Marie Ryan from Michigan State University, will share with us some of her insights gleaned from her extensive experience as both a consultant and researcher.

This month's presentation focuses on how to conduct publishable research within an applied context. Ann Marie asserts that "conducting high quality research in applied contexts has been both facilitated and inhibited by workplace changes in pace, structures and technology." Her talk this month will discuss issues and concerns she and her colleagues in both applied and academic settings have identified when they have pursued research projects that fit customer needs *and* that meet publication standards with regard to rigor and conceptual relevance. Although the talk will touch on challenges in gaining entry into organizations and persuading others of the value of research, her primary focus will be on how to conduct applied research that both informs business needs and is publishable.

Ann Marie Ryan is a Professor of Organizational Psychology at Michigan State University. She received her Ph.D. in 1987 from the University of Illinois-Chicago, and her dissertation research on interrater reliability and individual assessment ratings with Paul Sackett continues to inform how we as a field view assessment centers and individual assessment.

Ann Marie is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, the American Psychological Society, and the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, and a past-president of SIOP. She has also been very active in SIOP, the Academy of Management, the Michigan Association of Industrial-Organizational Psychologists and has served as a member of the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation.

Ann Marie's research and consulting experience is very broad. She has conducted research, consulted with many different organizations, and published on topics that range from contextual and non-ability factors in selection to organizational justice, applicant perceptions of fairness, and employee attitudes. Her primary interests are related to fairness in hiring and improving employee selection procedures. She has been on the editorial board of *Personnel Psychology* since 1996 and has been serving as its editor since December 2002. She also has served on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Human Performance*, and the *Journal of Management*. In 2003, she edited *Personality and Work* with Murray Barrick as part of the SIOP Organizational Frontiers series.

Professor Ryan brings a wealth of practical experience and academic rigor to this presentation, and all of us at MPPAW are hoping you will join us on February 17 for a lively and thought-provoking discussion.

## MPPAW Update

by Dan Sachau, President

Dr. Ann Marie Ryan is our featured speaker this month. Ann Marie is a Professor at Michigan State University and a former SIOP president. We are excited about her visit.

Do not forget to send me a description of your favorite HR myths. I would like to compile the myths by the end of the month. Here are some of the myths submitted by members thus far: Most employees hate their jobs. Yelling at employees blows of steam and prevents more extreme conflict in the future. Surveys only reflect the biases of the survey sponsor. Ultimately, experience and instincts will lead to better selection decisions than tests and data. Interviews are an absolutely essential part of the hiring process. All stress is bad stress. Everyone is above average, especially me. Money will make you happy. Great leaders are born not made. Send your myths to [Sachau@mnsu.edu](mailto:Sachau@mnsu.edu).

We are meeting at the St. Paul Campus of the University of Minnesota through May. Let us know how you feel about this location. We will have to schedule a location for next year's meetings soon so please give us some feedback about where you would like the MPPAW meetings.

I would also like to encourage those of you who might be in search of an intern to send a description of the internship position to Nikki Moore, our website coordinator, to post on the website. The students at St. Cloud State, U. of Minnesota, St. Thomas, and MSU will be looking for summer internships and they could use your help. See you on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

## January Presentation

Summary prepared by Bruce Sevy, SHL Americas

### Beliefs And Misbeliefs: What Really Matters In Selection

**Bruce A. Sevy, Ph.D.**, VP of Product Consulting for SHL Americas

The following summary was prepared by Bruce Sevy in his own words...

For many years I have earned my living helping organizations validate and implement pre-employment selection systems. During that period I have always wanted to conduct "the ultimate" selection experiment. That is, I wanted to have complete control over all aspects of the process: the validity of the selection assessment, the selection ratio used to make selection decisions, the form of the selection process (top down vs. minimum threshold), the reliability of the predictor and performance (criterion) measures. What's more, I wanted to study the impact of various combinations of these factors over five-year (or longer) organizational histories.

Well, it is quite apparent that I will never come close to the control I want in real organizations. So rather than let "the real world" get in my way, I decided to build a world of my own. A world in which I control all of the relevant factors and can study them at my leisure.

So that's exactly what I did. I built a computer simulation of the selection process that lets me generate populations of predictor and criterion measures with known (and controllable) means, SDs, reliabilities and validity. I used this simulator to study a variety of selection configurations and document their impact on average organizational performance levels, criterion variance, and uncorrected and corrected concurrent validity estimates. What I found surprised and enlightened me as to how selection seems to really work.



#### Increasing Organizational Performance

Most organizations select employees in order to increase their organization's performance. Estimating the impact of selection on a sample of applicants is very straightforward. First you compute the mean of the truncated distribution of applicant predictor scores and then you multiply by the validity coefficient. The resulting product is the mean of the criterion in the selected sample.

What was surprising (to me) was how long it takes to raise the average performance of an organization to this theoretical limit. At annual turnover of 30% it takes more than ten years to totally replace every individual in the organization. To get the full impact of a selection system you need to let it run for many, many years!

#### Decreasing Performance Variance

Surprisingly, the act of selecting higher performing individuals has very little effect on the variability in their performance. That is, while the average performance value will increase, the variance will not decrease all that much. After struggling with the formulas for a while I discovered that that is exactly what they predict – minimal decrease in performance variance.

#### Relationship of Performance to Turnover

My initial simulation assumed that the probability any individual terminates in any time period is unrelated to the individual's performance. You may well ask yourself why I made such an implausible choice in the first place. The reason is quite simple actually – I never gave it much thought at the time and it was very easy to program the computer that way.

After simulating many different selection configurations I (finally) got to thinking about the relationship between turnover and performance. In the real world they have to be related, don't they? Well I looked and looked for research on the topic and found almost nothing of help. So, I invented my own relationship. It seemed to me that the probably of turnover has a "U" shaped relationship with performance. Lower performing individuals are likely to be pushed out of the organization and higher performing individuals are likely to be promoted or seek other jobs in other organizations. I rewrote my simulator to reflect this "world according to Bruce" model of turnover and experienced the biggest surprise of all. Under this model of turnover all hell breaks loose: our ability to increase organization performance is drastically attenuated (to the tune of only about one-third what the statistics predict); performance variance is drastically curtailed (even though the statistics say it shouldn't be); and, worst of all, the statistics used to correct concurrent validity coefficients become widely inaccurate.

It seems that our entire statistical "model" of selection has an implicit assumption that turnover is unrelated to performance, something of which I at least was unaware. My simulations show that the nature of the turnover-performance relationship is the single most powerful factor influencing selection outcomes – more powerful than predictor reliability, more powerful than predictor validity. Remarkably, there seems to be very little empirical data about the relationship between performance and turnover in the real world.

## Member Profiles

by Megan Pavot, Co-Secretary

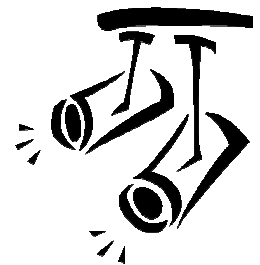
*The Spotlight is on...*

**Kris Johnson, GMAC-RFC**



ties, just by looking outside her back door.

Kris attended Augsburg College in Minneapolis for her undergraduate degree in psychology, and received her graduate degree in Human Resource development, with an emphasis in organizational development, at the University of St. Thomas. While at St. Thomas, Kris was able to work with a number of professors who influenced her greatly. Dr. Diane Stoy encouraged her to blend rigor and a systemic approach in her studies as well as to challenge herself. Dr. Mitch Kuzy shared practical models from his organizational interventions, which Kris has found extremely useful



Originally from Plymouth, MN, Kris Johnson has taken advantage of the wealth of opportunities Minnesota offers for someone interested in I/O Psychology. She was able to garner her education, as well as numerous employment opportuni-

in her career. Dr. Mick Sheppeck was passionate about sharing his knowledge and experience in HR practices he acquired from his work in the corporate world. In addition, his academic knowledge in the practices of I/O Psychology combined with his work experience to provide a blend of theory and practical application that Kris found especially helpful.

Kris began her career in a training and development capacity at Honeywell, and transitioned to 3M in 1990 to work in their learning and development business. She spent five years of her career at 3M under the direction of Dr. Karen Paul and Dr. Kevin Nilan, learning both the business of psychometrics and how to implement an employee opinion survey process within an organization.

Kris is currently employed at GMAC-RFC, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of General Motors. The company is focused on providing innovative capital solutions to consumers and business partners worldwide. She works in the area of Global Culture as an HR Consultant helping design and integrate HR products, processes, and services that assist business leaders in achieving their business goals. She has been employed in this capacity for 5 years. In her current role, she encourages business leaders and managers to introduce processes and practices that support GMAC-RFC's entrepreneurial spirit, create an engaging work environment, and also meet their regulatory/compliance needs. She has also enjoyed helping to create an environment that supports global communication and the integration of GMAC-RFC's HR practices within their International locations.

Her hobbies include world-wide traveling, which affords her the opportunity to explore different cultures, attending step aerobics, and spending time at her lake home on Gull Lake in Nisswa, MN, enjoying nature at its best.

Kris became a member of MPPAW in 1998.

## Announcements



For Licensed Psychologists needing to meet the CEU requirements of the Minnesota Board of Psychology, attendance at each MPPAW event counts as 1.5 hours of CEU credit. And only \$10 added to your membership dues covers all the expenses for the MPPAW year, up to 10.5 CEU credits!

**Continuing Education Credits.** For Licensed Psychologists needing to meet the CEU requirements of the Minnesota Board of Psychology, attendance at each MPPAW event counts as 1.5 hours of CEU credit. And only \$10 added to your membership dues covers all the ex-

## Format of Meetings

Meetings begin at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour, followed by the presentation at 6:20 p.m. The meeting will conclude at 8:00 p.m.

A fee of \$10.00 per MPPAW member and \$20.00 per non-member (\$5.00 and \$15.00 for students) covers food at the social hour, as well as the costs associated with the presentation that evening.

Our location is the Continuing Education and Conference Center on the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. Check the TV screen at the entrance for room information.

See map and driving directions on the next page.



## How to Get There...

**From I-694** take 35W south to the Cleveland Avenue exit (Note: exit to the left). Follow Cleveland Avenue to Larpenteur Avenue. Go east (left) on Larpenteur to Gortner, turn south (right) on Gortner and go to Buford Avenue. Turn east (left) on Buford Avenue to the parking area.

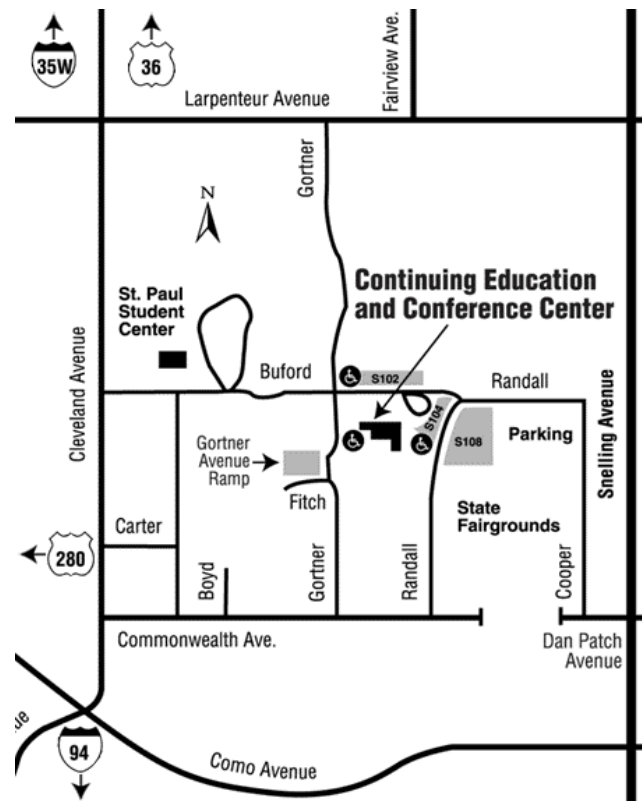
**From I-35W** take the Highway 36 exit and turn south on Cleveland Avenue to Larpenteur Avenue. Go east (left) on Larpenteur to Gortner, turn south (right) on Gortner and go to Buford Avenue. Turn east (left) on Buford Avenue to the parking area.

**From downtown St. Paul:** Go west on I-94 to Snelling Ave. Go north on Snelling Ave. to Larpenteur Avenue. Go west (left) on Larpenteur to Gortner, turn south (left) on Gortner and go to Buford Avenue. Turn east (left) on Buford Avenue to the parking area.

**From downtown Minneapolis:** Go east on I-94 to MN-280, exit number 236. (Note: exit to the left). Merge onto MN-280 north. Exit at Larpenteur Ave. Take Larpenteur east (right) to Gortner (3rd traffic light). Turn south (right) on Gortner and go to Buford Avenue. Turn east (left) on Buford Avenue to the parking area.

**PARKING ADVISORY:** There are contract lots at the U of M that restrict parking to those with a pass. They are clearly marked with signs – if you park there, you will be ticketed. Instead:

- Use the Gortner Avenue ramp.
- Use Lot S104 (drive past the conference center and enter the lot on the same side of the street).



### MPPAW Officers and Key Committee Members

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