



# Minnesota Professionals for Psychology Applied to Work

## Upcoming Speaker

By Marcia Sytsma, VP Programs

### Thursday, Oct. 21: RASCH Modeling: I/O Psychology Applications

**John Kulas, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Saint Cloud State University

Problems with the use of graphic rating scales have been frequently cited in I/O measurement applications. Although alternative response scale formats have been suggested, most practitioners have found it difficult to adopt these alternative formats. Our October speaker, Professor John Kulas of St. Cloud State University, takes the perspective that these response formats are "here to stay" for I/O practitioners and researchers. Instead of suggesting alternative response formats or item-types, he will present a "tool" that I/O practitioners can use when scaling responses taken from graphic rating scale assessments. The "tool" he will present is a psychometric orientation known as RASCH measurement.

RASCH measurement is a perspective on measurement that is relatively more popular in education than in business contexts. John's presentation will provide an overview of the RASCH measurement model, introduce session attendants to a RASCH software program, and demonstrate how RASCH modeling can be used to investigate common questions encountered when using graphic rating scale response formats in I-O applications. He will demonstrate how the RASCH orientation can give the I-O investigator a different perspective than either Item Response (IRT) and/or Classical Test Theory perspectives on such topics as: leniency, dimensionality, differential item functioning, obtained scale of measurement, and unexpected response patterns. These topics will be covered through applying the RASCH measurement model to both multi-rater and personality assessment data-sets taken from applied (work) samples.

Professor John Kulas is in his third year as an assistant professor of Psychology at St. Cloud State University. He earned his Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Northern Illinois University in 2002 and his B.A. in psychology from the University of Minnesota in 1994. Before joining SCSU, John served as a research coordinator at Corporate Psychology Resources in Atlanta. He also had Chicago stints with SBC, Inc and NCS Pearson (London House Assessments at the time) while pursuing his Ph.D. He has a dual perspective on measurement gained from his research interests combined with his experience managing localized validation projects, developing and administering assessments (mostly customized predictors and multirater criteria instruments), and delivering feedback from organizational climate surveys. John continues to schedule consulting in Minneapolis around his academic duties in St. Cloud through his collaboration with Employers Association as a test construction specialist.

## MPPAW Update

by Dan Sachau, President

Last month's meeting was a successful start to the season. William Shepherd from ePredix and Fritz Drasgow, SIOP President, presented their research on the internet applications for assessment. This month, Dr. Jonathan Kulas from St. Cloud State will present.

For those of you who have not visited the MPPAW website in a while, you may be surprised to see that the site ([www.mppaw.org](http://www.mppaw.org)) contains an extensive announcement/employment section, photos from recent meetings, PowerPoint presentations, and a program schedule. Thanks to Nikki Moore for managing the site.

We are having some room scheduling difficulties so we will be changing meeting rooms after October. Please keep an eye on your e-mail for the new location(s).

**Starting this month, the newsletter will only come in an on-line version** (see the reminder below). This provides a substantial savings for MPPAW and allows us to send the newsletter to a much wider audience.

Speaking of a wider audience, if you have friends and associates who would benefit from MPPAW membership, please forward their names either to me or to Carrie Christianson DeMay ([CDeMay@DataRecognitionCorp.com](mailto:CDeMay@DataRecognitionCorp.com)). We will be glad to send them a formal invitation!



**Reminder:** Be sure we have your current e-mail address so you don't experience any delays in getting the newsletter (it will also be posted on our website). You can provide it when renewing your membership, or you can contact Carrie Christianson DeMay, our VP of Membership, to update your contact information.

## September Presentation

Summary prepared by Jenny Merriam, Co-Secretary

### Current Trends and Innovations in Computerized Assessments

Fritz Drasgow, University of Illinois

William Shepherd, ePredix

Dr. Fritz Drasgow and Dr. William Shepherd gave a presentation on the current issues and innovations in computerized assessments for the September 16<sup>th</sup> MPPAW meeting. They spoke about the American Psychological Association's Taskforce on Internet Testing's Report, gave examples of innovative approaches to authentic Internet assessments, discussed alternatives to using the Internet, and presented research on proctoring.



Much advancement in testing and assessment has been made with the use of computers and the Internet. Along with this great accomplishment comes great responsibility, or so we hope. The APA Taskforce on Internet Testing was created to address the issues related to testing via the Internet, focusing on reliability, validity, item security and copyrights, and administrative procedures. Chaired by Jack Naglieri and Fritz Drasgow,

the Taskforce recognized the positive aspects of Internet assessment including its ability to reach a large number of people in very little time, quicker scoring, and faster updating abilities to existing tests with relatively little cost or effort. They also addressed the limitations, which included cultural and linguistic dilemmas, problems surrounding reliability and validity, and ethical issues (e.g., potentially making incomplete and inaccurate assessments of individuals). The Taskforce made three recommendations for the future: (a) traditional psychometric standards must apply to Internet testing; (b) the validity of inferences from the many diverse types of Internet tests must be demonstrated; and (c) Internet site authors should be accountable so that users receive the same type of protection as in traditional testing.

Another issue related to Internet-based testing is striving for authentic, innovative assessments. The framework presented for innovation in Internet testing involves five dimensions. The first, item format, deals with the type of response made by the examinee. Second is response action. Related to the first, this is the means by which examinees make their response. Third is the use of non-text stimuli, or media inclusion. Fourth is the degree of interactivity, measuring whether the test reacts in response to the examinee's actions. Finally, the scoring method is considered, i.e., how are the examinee responses converted into quantitative scores? Using these dimensions in Internet test creation will lead to assessment authenticity.

Some of the alternatives that were presented to Internet testing were using personal digital assistants (PDAs) and interactive voice response (IVR) on the telephone. Concerns with using PDAs come from the smaller screen size, browser compatibility, and difficulties with marking a response. However, using PDAs as compared to desktop computers for test administration found no mean differences by item type, or in overall scores. Some of the difficulties identified with using



the IVR administration method surface from the item response format (short-term memory limitations in response options), the length of assessment, cell phone signal strength, and from capturing participants' names. Similar results were found when using IVR compared to using the web, other than more Blacks and fewer Asians chose IVR.

Proctoring in Internet assessments is a "triple threat." Application identification, test security, and cheating are the three main issues that administrators face. A common view is that the likelihood of cheating is related to the stakes of a test. If the stakes are low, there is little incentive for cheating. However, if the stakes of the test are high, there is a greater incentive for individuals to cheat. Research findings suggest that un-proctored Internet testing may be viable under some circumstances. Re-testing might be one way to address un-proctored cheating.

Retinal scans, fingerprinting, and computer cameras are interesting ideas for proctoring. Innovative alternative testing formats include using holograms, virtual reality and videogames. I/O Psychologists need to contribute to the research efforts on these and other ideas for authentic testing.

## Member Profiles

by Megan Pavot, Co-Secretary

**Andi (Rittman) Lassiter, Ph.D.**, Professor, MSU-Mankato

The headline reads: "Wife of Rib-Eating Contest Champion wins Demolition Derby." At least it might in a couple of years. Andi and her husband Scott, who were married on May 29<sup>th</sup> of this year, have been spending their first couple of months in Minnesota getting acquainted with the Minnesota lifestyle – including county fairs, rib-fest, and the demolition derby. They are also preparing for the harsh Minnesota winters, and looking forward to hitting the slopes. Apparently Andi didn't realize there were ski resorts in Minnesota – she "thought it was too cold here for that!"

A graduate of George Mason University, Andi recently moved to Minnesota from Arlington, VA where she worked at the Army Research Institute. She also taught several classes at George Mason while completing her PhD in I/O. Andi received her Master's degree in I/O from Southwest Missouri State University where she worked with Dr. Bob Jones on emotional expression and emotional intelligence research. She hasn't done much additional research in the area, although she still considers it an interesting topic.

At George Mason University, she conducted research on multi-team systems (MTS) for the U.S. Air Force under the supervision of Dr. Steve Zaccaro (George Mason), Dr. John Mathieu (U Conn), and Dr. Michelle Marks (Florida International U, now at George Mason). She appreciated the opportunity to "work with a variety of I/O psychologists on this project" and considered it a valuable developmental experience for her. The MTS research examined training methods, team processes, and team performance. In addition, Andi worked with Dr. Zaccaro on developing a leadership assessment tool for Army junior-level leaders. She was able to conduct additional research with the Army because of a research fellowship at the U.S Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI). She was a Consortium Research Fellow in the Advanced Training Methods Research Unit, which allowed her to work with ARI scientists to evaluate the effectiveness of dispersed collaborative training programs. Their program of research sought to explain how to most effectively train soldiers who have to work together toward the same goals, but from different locations throughout the battlefield – much like distance learning. Consequently, they used principles from both team training and distance learning.

While at George Mason, Andi was also the lead consultant and analyst for the University Life (Student Affairs) division where she was responsible for coordinating the assessment efforts for all University Life programs and services. It was quite a different experience from the other projects she worked on during her graduate school career, but it taught her how to translate her I/O skills to a different setting. In addition, Andi worked on many short-term consulting projects, one of her favorite being a project for Broward County School District (Florida), examining the effectiveness of charter schools.

Andi is new to MPPAW (she joined in September), but she was excited to see that so many people turned out for the first meeting, and can't wait to meet more people.

## Announcements

**Distance Learning Program.** The Society of Consulting Psychology (division 13 of the APA) announces their fall 2004 distance learning program. These are teleconference-based seminars being held in October, November, and December. The October program will be held on Thursday, Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> between 2-6 pm Eastern time. The topic for this initial teleconference will be: **"The New APA Ethics Code and Consulting Psychology."** The featured speakers are Dr. Rodney Lowman and Dr. Stewart Cooper.

The complete schedule for this series is posted on the MPPAW website, as well as registration information. You can also check the SCP website at [www.apa.org/divisions/div13](http://www.apa.org/divisions/div13).

**MRA Minnesota/Upper Midwest Chapter.** The November meeting of the Marketing Research Association's Upper Midwest Chapter is entitled **"Marketing Research and the Development of IKEA Twin Cities."** Max Urban Hedberg, Store Manager, and Mary Sorenson, Public Relations Manager, will discuss the market research that was conducted to prepare for promoting and opening the new Twin Cities store – the first North American IKEA store in a new market since 1999!

This is a breakfast meeting starting at 8:00 am. The date is Tuesday, Nov. 9. The meeting will be held at the IKEA store in Bloomington. **MRA extends the member rate of \$40 to all MPPAW members who are interested in attending (guests are usually \$50)!** Seating is limited; the registration deadline is Tuesday, Nov. 2. If you are interested, please send an e-mail to [info@mnmra.org](mailto:info@mnmra.org). For more information, check their website or contact Clark Kristensen at 651-905-7893 or e-mail him at the above address.



### 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 expenses for the MPPAW year, up to 10.5 CEU credits!

## 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.



### Location, Location,

**Location...** A reminder that MPPAW is moving! The location for the November meeting has not yet been determined. Look for more news in your e-mail and in next month's newsletter.

### But for October...

...we are still at the **Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs**, University of Minnesota (West Bank of the Twin Cities campus), 301 – 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Minneapolis. The room reserved for the presentation is 180A and B. Parking is available at the ramp across the street, at the corner of 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street South.

**Directions from the west:** take I-94 east to the Riverside Avenue exit. Turn left onto 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. Cross over I-94 and then turn left onto Riverside. Follow Riverside to ¼ block past 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and enter the parking ramp on your right.

**Directions from the east:** take I-94 to the Riverside Avenue exit. Turn right onto Riverside. Follow Riverside to ¼ block past 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and enter the parking ramp on your right.

**Directions from the south:** take I-35W north to the University of Minnesota – West Bank exit. Turn right onto Washington Avenue (which will curve to the right in 2 blocks and become Cedar Avenue). Turn left at the third stoplight onto 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (one-way). Enter the parking ramp on your right.

**Directions from the north:** take I-35W south. Take the Washington Avenue exit (to West Bank). Turn left at the top of the exit ramp onto Washington Avenue (which will curve to the right in 3 blocks and become Cedar Avenue). Turn left at the fourth stoplight onto 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (one-way). Enter the parking ramp on your right. The Humphrey Institute is across the street from the parking ramp, next to the Carlson Center.

## MPPAW Officers and Key Committee Members

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