

Wayne State University

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Teaching Outside the Box

Wayne State University in Detroit, MI isn't just another university. Yes, it offers the typical mix of Associates, Bachelors, Masters and even Doctoral degrees. But it sets itself apart by taking a lead role in the field of psychology.

Ranked as one of the top departments by both U.S. News and World Report as well as the National Research Council, and featuring its own Industrial/Organizational Psychology research and consulting team ([Applied Psychology and Organizational Research Group \(APORG\)](#)), Wayne State's psychology program integrates learning with research for a superior education.

As part of their M.A. program in I/O psychology, Wayne State offers a unique class: Employment Testing. This class, which has been a part of the university's curriculum since 2006, gives students the opportunity to administer, score and learn how to use a variety of employment tests.

“Many I/O psychology programs don't use actual tests in their classes,” says Dr. Cary Lichtman, Associate Professor and Director of the I/O Psychology M.A. program for Wayne State. “Having hands-on experience helps the students hit the ground running.”

Dr. Lichtman, who has been with Wayne State for 40 years and is a staff member of APORG, began his career working at the IRS doing job analyses. His expertise in the field of candidate selection led to the creation of the Employment Testing class.

The class uses a large battery of common personality, psychomotor, cognitive ability and skills tests, including the Wonderlic Personnel Test and the Wonderlic Basic Skills Test.

“Wonderlic figures prominently in our program,” Dr. Lichtman states. “Everyone

in this field should know about Wonderlic tests, which is why we include them in our curriculum.”

The two Wonderlic tests also figure prominently in the research the university conducts.

“Anytime the students are measuring cognitive ability, they use the Wonderlic Personnel Test. **Being only 12 minutes makes it easy to use, and being accurate makes it a very good predictor of job performance.**”

Students have used the test for many studies including how intelligence is linked to personality, the predictive power of cognitive ability testing at the university level compared to high school, and the range of scores for various professions.

The students have also done studies on the predictive power of the Wonderlic Personnel Test versus the traditional hiring process.

“Employers have told us that the interview-only hiring process yields too many bad hires,” he explains. “We can learn many things from an interview but not always predict how well they'll do on the job.”

Employment testing to predict how well a candidate will do on the job is an important part of I/O psychology, and Wayne State graduate students will be well-versed in the use of the Wonderlic Personnel Test, among others. Thanks to Dr. Lichtman and his colleagues, they will leave the university not only with a degree, but with the depth of knowledge and experience that few other schools in the nation can match.