

Master's Graduate Student Handbook

Rice University
Department of Psychological
Sciences

Rice University
Department of Psychological Sciences
Master of Industrial-Organizational Psychology Program

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Introduction

Industrial-Organizational Psychology is a branch of psychology that applies psychological theories and principles to organizations. Often referred to as *I-O psychology*, this field's focus is the scientific consideration of a wide range of psychological factors critical to the workplace: e.g., the nature and necessity of technical, interpersonal, and self-management skills; how people work within diverse and dynamic work environments; improving training in an aging workforce with greater technological demands; managing a diverse range of people and projects successfully and safely; and dealing with disruptive changes that inevitably face jobs and organizational cultures, ranging from mergers and acquisitions, to AI and automation.

Rice University's I-O psychology graduate program is nationally recognized (e.g., out of our six I-O faculty, three of them have served as President of our national society, the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP), www.siop.org). In addition to our outstanding graduate program and university, the city of Houston offers key advantages to our graduate students as a city with a highly diverse population, along with a wide array of industries that have a very high demand for I-O expertise, such as healthcare, energy, and aerospace.

The Master in Industrial-Organizational Psychology (MIOP) graduate program increases the depth of students' knowledge of critical concepts and methods in I-O psychology, as well as how to apply that knowledge to real-world organizational problems. MIOP provides students with very strong and valuable training for work in a variety of consulting firms and industry. This focus complements the strengths of our Ph.D. program in I-O psychology, which has its strengths in research. Overall, this means that MIOP students greatly benefit from a variety of cutting-edge organizational research and science that informs their practice.

In pursuit of their degree, all MIOP students will achieve the following outcomes:

- Establish a solid foundation of knowledge pertaining to psychological theories and principles essential to I-O psychology, including individual differences, psychometrics, organizational theories, and social and personality theories.
- Conceptualize, propose, and design research studies and projects that apply principles and knowledge that serve to heighten our understanding and prediction of human behavior in organizations.
- Develop strong quantitative skills when analyzing psychological data, in order to support scientific and practical inferences that help solve real-world organizational problems.

- Demonstrate a high level of skill when communicating and interacting with lay individuals in organizational settings about scientific knowledge and products of I-O psychology.
- Appreciate the role and critical tasks of an I-O psychologist as an internal or external consultant to organizations and organizational leadership.

The program is a non-thesis full-time degree program (e.g., enrolled students cannot work full time simultaneously; no night classes are offered). Students will complete 44 hours across 12 courses.

Academic Requirements

The MIOP degree is a non-thesis Master’s degree. To learn the university requirements for graduation and their details, it is **very important** for you to refer to [Non-Thesis Master’s Degrees](#) in the General Announcements on the Rice University website. We summarize requirements below, but emphasize that this is unofficial; the General Announcements are official.

Students pursuing the MIOP degree must complete:

- A minimum of 12 courses (44 credit hours) to satisfy degree requirements.
- A minimum of 44 credit hours of graduate-level study (coursework at the 500-level or above).
- A minimum of 38 credit hours must be taken at Rice University.
- A minimum overall GPA of 2.667.
- A minimum GPA of 3.000 in required coursework.
- A maximum of 2 courses (6 credit hours) from transfer credit.
- A capstone experience course. This is to be a project course, supervised jointly by one or more of the MIOP faculty and will be taken in the summer immediately after the student’s first year, as well as both the fall and spring semesters of the second year.

Total Credit Hours required for the MIOP degree: **44**

Required Courses

- PSYC 502 – Advanced Psychological Statistics I (4 hours)
- PSYC 503 – Advanced Psychological Statistics II (3 hours)
- PSYC 530 – Foundations of I-O Psychology (3 hours)
- PSYC 533 – I-O Psychology Research Seminar (1 hour, taken each semester for a total of 4 hours)
- PSYC 634 – Personnel Psychology (3 hours)
- PSYC 636 – Organizational Psychology (3 hours)
- PSYC 6XX – Capstone Experience in I-O Psychology (3 hours, taken over three semesters for a total of 9 hours)

Additional Courses (choose 5)

- PSYC 507 – Research Methods (3 hours)
- PSYC 550 – Foundations of Social Psychology (3 hours)
- PSYC 601 – Multivariate Statistics (3 hours)
- PSYC 602 – Psychometrics (3 hours)
- PSYC 630 – Training (3 hours)
- PSYC 631 – Foundations of Individual Differences (3 hours)
- PSYC 632 – Leadership (3 hours)
- PSYC 637 – Meta-Analysis in Psychological Research (3 hours)
- PSYC 651 – Topics in Social Psychology
- Other courses approved by the MIOP faculty

Proposed Plan-of-Study

The following plan-of-study represents an example five-semester sequence in which students pursuing the MIOP degree complete the required coursework. Schedules will be based on course availability each semester.

1st Semester (Fall) – 11 Credit Hours

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
PSYC 533	I-O Psychology Research Seminar	1
PSYC 502	Advanced Psychological Statistics I	4
PSYC 530	Foundations of I-O Psychology	3
PSYC XXX	ELECTIVE ONE	3

2nd Semester (Spring) – 10 Credit Hours

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
PSYC 533	I-O Psychology Research Seminar	1
PSYC 503	Advanced Psychological Statistics II	3
PSYC 634	Personnel Psychology	3
PSYC 636	Organizational Psychology	3

Summer – 3 Credit Hours

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
PSYC 6XX	Capstone Experience in I-O Psychology	3

3rd Semester (Fall) – 10 Credit Hours

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
PSYC 533	I-O Psychology Research Seminar	1
PSYC XXX	ELECTIVE TWO	3
PSYC XXX	ELECTIVE THREE	3
PSYC 6XX	Capstone Experience in I-O Psychology	3

4th Semester (Spring) – 10 Credit Hours

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
PSYC 533	I-O Psychology Research Seminar	1
PSYC XXX	ELECTIVE FOUR	3
PSYC XXX	ELECTIVE FIVE	3
PSYC 6XX	Capstone Experience in I-O Psychology	3

Academic Progress and Expectations

Expectations

MIOP trains students to acquire a high level of professional knowledge and skills to become a successful industrial-organizational (I-O) psychologist. This means that students will be trained in both research and the application of that research to practical organizational concerns. We expect that students will not only embrace and engage in these practical aspects; they will also reap great long-term value from the MIOP program through understanding the organizational and psychological research about human behavior that lies behind these tools and techniques.

All graduate students are expected to perform well in all classes, project work, and in interactions with other students and faculty throughout their time in the program. We also encourage students to become involved in a faculty mentor's research laboratory, where the faculty will guide students in effective appropriate presentation and publication in professional outlets relevant to the student's career aspirations.

Students whose cumulative grade point average or the average for the most recently completed semester (including the summer semester) falls below 3.0 are placed on probationary status. Grades of B- reflect marginal but passing performance, and grades below B- are considered failing. Students making below a B- in a required course are typically required to retake the course. Given the restricted timeline of the program, the course may not be offered again before the 2-year time limit is reached. In these cases, the faculty may allow a student with a grade of C+ to retake the final exam or do other work demonstrating mastery of the material in order to satisfy the requirement. Only one make-up chance will be granted.

For the university's policies on academic probation and dismissals, please refer to the General Announcements: <https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/>.

After the student's first year in the program, the student must engage in the capstone experience. This capstone might entail work that may be performed at the student's home employer, or the student may obtain professional-level employment elsewhere. Alternatively and as appropriate, students can also work closely on a research capstone project with I-O faculty at Rice to fulfill the course requirements. Critically, the work must be related to industrial-organizational psychology, and it is approved by the I-O psychology faculty involved in the MIOP program. The capstone work continues into both fall and spring semesters of the second year of the program, but the nature of the I-O work involvement may change over time, again with I-O faculty guidance and approval.

Both research and application capstones include a written component, consisting of an APA-compliant report of sufficient length to cover the material; and a presentation component, in which the student presents the work to the weekly I-O Psychology Research Seminar course (PSYC 533). This requires the proposal be approved in the semester prior to enrolling in the capstone course. A first draft of the proposal is due halfway through the fall semester (exact date will vary with the academic calendar) and it must be approved by the end of the semester.

Evaluations

Every graduate student's academic progress is evaluated informally at the end of each semester, and formally at the end of the first academic year.

All first-year students are reviewed after each semester at a faculty meeting. Students receive an evaluation letter from the director of the graduate program written based on the discussion at the faculty meeting. Students are evaluated in terms of course grades, progress in research, and overall performance.

If a student is not making adequate progress, a description of the areas in which progress is not adequate will be spelled out and steps required by the student to remedy the problem(s) will be contained in the written evaluation.

Petitions and Appeals

Petitions and appeals involve exceptions to academic requirements, regulations, and judgments.

Course Substitutions

A student wishing to substitute a course for a required course must obtain the approval of the MIOP faculty. The faculty will then recommend the substitution to the Director of Graduate Studies, who decides whether or not to approve the recommendation. If the course to be used as a substitute is on the same topic as the required course, then the advice of the current instructor of the required course will be sought. If the recommendation is not approved by the Director of Graduate Studies, the MIOP faculty can appeal the decision, first to the graduate committee and then to the whole faculty. If the recommendation is approved, the student will need to submit a Graduate Request for Transfer Credit form to the Registrar with a copy of the transferred course's syllabus.

Petitions seeking exceptions to academic requirements or regulations should be submitted in writing at least 30 days before the requirement or regulation takes effect.

Academic Decisions

Petitions regarding the reconsideration of an academic decision must be submitted in writing within 15 days from the time that the student knew or should reasonably have known of the decision being petitioned, or within 15 days after an unsuccessful effort to resolve the situation informally. Petitions should include all relevant information that may impact the decision. If a student wishes to appeal an academic decision made by an individual faculty member, he or she should present, in writing, an appeal to the standing graduate committee, who will reconsider the decision in view of the information provided in the petition and consult with the Department Chair when appropriate. This committee may choose to return the matter to the faculty member, acting as a committee of the whole, for further consideration. Appeals should include all relevant information that may impact the appeal.

Academic decisions are afforded one level of appeal. Departmental decisions, such as dismissal, are appealed to the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies as described in the [General Announcements](#).

Student Wellbeing

Title IX

Rice encourages any student who has experienced an incident of sexual, relationship, or other interpersonal violence, harassment, or gender discrimination to seek support. There are many options available both on and off campus for all graduate students, regardless of whether the perpetrator was a fellow student, a staff or faculty member, or someone not affiliated with the university.

Students should be aware when seeking support on campus that most employees are required by Title IX to disclose all incidents of non-consensual interpersonal behaviors to Title IX professionals on campus who can act to support that student and meet their needs. The therapists

at the Rice Counseling Center and the doctors at Student Health Services are confidential, meaning that Rice will not be informed about the incident if a student discloses to one of these Rice staff members. Rice prioritizes student privacy and safety, and only shares disclosed information on a need-to-know basis.

If you are in need of assistance or simply would like to talk to someone, please call Rice Wellbeing and Counseling Center, which includes Title IX Support, at x3311 (713-348-3311).

Policies, including Sexual Misconduct Policy and Student Code of Conduct, and more information regarding Title IX can be found at <https://safe.rice.edu>.

Grievances and Problem Resolution

The Department of Psychological Sciences takes grievances and problems seriously as soon as they are raised, and it handles them through the appropriate channels and policies that reflect expertise and experience in handling them appropriately.

In addition to being in agreement with the regulations stated in this Master's Graduate Student Handbook, students must also be in agreement with the university's General Announcements and the Code of Conduct. If there ever is conflicting information or conflicting implications given the grievance or problem at hand, university-wide regulations always take precedence over department-wide regulations, and department-wide regulations take precedence over MIOP-wide regulations.

Whenever in doubt, students should seek help first at the department level (Graduate Coordinator, Program Director(s), Director of Graduate Studies, and/or Department Chair) and then at the central administration level (Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies).

It is always helpful to be informed of the university's policies on grievances and problem resolution, before any grievances and problems arise. Therefore, please refer to the General Announcements: <https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/rights-responsibilities/dispute-resolution/>.

The Department of Psychological Sciences is resolutely committed to an environment that promotes deep intellectual engagement and high research productivity, as supported by strong mentorship, teamwork, and collegiality. Ultimately, the department—faculty, staff, graduate students, and alumni—seek to strongly support and celebrate the academic and professional successes of its graduate students.
