The OPWL Department is Celebrating 30 Years of Excellence 1988 - 2018
Mission: To develop organizational performance and workplace learning professionals who can engineer interventions to solve organizational problems.

FROM IPT TO OPWL

1987
In 1987, Boise State’s College of Education offers a master’s degree in Education including courses in Instructional Technology. Dr. Dean Spitzer is named Program Director and Chair.

In 1988, the program is awarded a grant from the National Guard Bureau to deliver a master of science (M.S.) degree in Instructional Technology online, using a DOS-based bulletin board system. This marks the start of the department’s online master’s degree program.

1990
The program is renamed Instructional & Performance Technology (IPT) and becomes part of the College of Technology. Dr. Mark Eisley is named Program Director and Chair.

The department offers a M.S degree in IPT on campus as well as online.

Ms. Jo Ann Fenner joins the department as Associate Program Developer and Ms. Linda Burnett joins as Office Coordinator. They completed the IPT M.S. degree in 1990 and 1995 respectively.

1991
Mr. Ron Grames joins as Technical Coordinator.

1992
Dr. David Cox joins the full-time faculty.

By May 1992, a total of 15 students have graduated. In Fall 1992, 20 students enrolled on campus and 61 students enrolled online.

1996
Dr. Donald Winiecki joins the full-time faculty.

The College of Technology is reorganized into two colleges—the College of Engineering and the College of Applied Technology. The IPT program becomes a department within the College of Engineering.

1999
Dr. Seung Yoon (Yonnie) Chyung joins the full-time faculty.

The department starts using Lotus Notes as its online delivery system.

2000
Dr. Don Stepich joins the full-time faculty.

By fall 2000, 355 students have graduated.

2002
Dr. Linda Huglin joins the full-time faculty.

2004
Dr. Linda Huglin joins the full-time faculty.

2005
Dr. Anthony Marker joins the full-time faculty.

2007
Dr. David Cox retires as an emeritus professor and Dr. Steve Villachica joins the full-time faculty.

By May 2007, a total of 505 students have graduated. In Fall 2007, the department starts offering Human Performance Technology (HPT) graduate certificate program.

2009
The Workplace E-Learning and Performance Support (WELPS) graduate certificate program starts in Spring 2009.

2010
The department begins offering the Workplace Instructional Design (WIDe) graduate certificate program in Spring 2010.

2011
Brandalyn Athons joins the department as Web Design Specialist.

2012
The department starts offering the M.S. degree and three certificate programs only online.

By Fall of 2012, over 800 students have graduated.

2013
The department changes its name to Organizational Performance and Workplace Learning (OPWL).

Dr. Quincy Conley joins the full-time faculty.

2014
Dr. Lisa Giacumo joins the full-time faculty.

Dr. Don Stepich retires and is awarded emeritus status.

The department migrates its online delivery system to Blackboard.

2015
Mr. Kelly Weak (’09 IPT graduate) joins the department as Operations Manager.

Dr. Linda Huglin, Ms. Linda Burnett, and Mr. Ron Grames retire and are awarded emeritus status.

Dr. Soo Jeoung “Crystal” Han, Dr. In Gu Kang, and Dr. Vicki Stieha join the full-time faculty.

2016
Dr. Anthony Marker joins the full-time faculty.

2017
Dr. Seung Youn (Yonnie) Chyung joins the full-time faculty.

2018
The department celebrates its 30th anniversary.

Vision: To be an internationally recognized center of scholarship in organizational performance and workplace learning.
Congratulations from the Dean

On behalf of the College of Engineering, I extend my congratulations to the Department of Organizational Performance and Workplace Learning (OPWL) as they celebrate 30 years of providing online education in support of their mission to train “professionals who can engineer interventions to solve organizational problems.” Pioneering online education, OPWL has embraced its commitment to educating professionals and improving workplace performance, initially in support of a grant awarded by the U.S. National Guard, and today as a nationally recognized leader and innovator in integrating organizational performance and workplace learning with online education. A testament to this commitment are the hundreds of OPWL alumni around the world that are making impactful, positive change at their places of employment. In recognition of all the OPWL faculty, staff, students, and alumni promoting the success of others over the last thirty years, please join me in celebrating this important milestone.

With warm regards,
JoAnn Slama Lighty
Dean, College of Engineering

A Message from the Department Chair

As the department chair, I want to take this opportunity to share with you this image (left) of how I view my priorities as chair. It is meant to show what I see as Activities (means) and the Goals (ends). This is the structure I turn to when making decisions about budgets, resource allocations, policies, and workload assignments.

The OPWL Department Chair, Dr. Anthony Marker, “egging on” one of his chickens, Egg Salad, with a piece of melon.

Based on their research project, Jordy LePiane (right) won a Student Success Award and Megan Kennedy (middle) won a College of Engineering Award at Boise State University’s 2018 Graduate Student Showcase. Dr. Yonnie Chyung (left) was their sponsoring faculty.

Most students are part-time students who need to balance their course work with a full-time job.

Full-time students complete their master’s degree in three semesters, and most part-time students complete theirs in 10 semesters.

Front cover caption:
Based on their research project, Jordy LePiane (right) won a Student Success Award and Megan Kennedy (middle) won a College of Engineering Award at Boise State University’s 2018 Graduate Student Showcase. Dr. Yonnie Chyung (left) was their sponsoring faculty.
Coached By Successful Graduates on How to Start a New Career in OPWL

The OPWL department continuously explores what students need to become more effective practitioners and pursue their “dream positions.” The department saw an opportunity for many students, especially those new to the OPWL fields, to benefit from the knowledge of experienced professionals. This might include a little advice on how to “break through” into positions requiring experience or practice in articulating what they know and can do as in a job interview.

For those that lack workplace practice, some coaching can give that extra boost of confidence that students need to go after the new career they have always dreamed of.

In Spring 2016, the OPWL department began offering a new 1-credit 10-week course—OPWL 516 Foundations of Professional Development—to students pursuing entry-level job opportunities in OPWL fields. The course, led by Dr. Becker (’02 IPT graduate and adjunct faculty), uses a client-centered approach to help students build confidence. Along with Dr. Becker, the course employs a team of five coaches who are IPT/OPWL graduates including Pat Brown (’08), Sonja Frazier (’04), Dennis Ahren (’09), Tiffany Carter (’15), and Lorece Beidel (’15). All coaches have experience in hiring learning and development personnel, a background in coaching, and desire to “pay it forward.”

Once enrolled in the course, students identify developmental opportunities and goals. They are then partnered with a coach and converse regularly through emails and teleconferenced coaching sessions. The coach acts as a “guide on the side” using active questioning and assignments to target job opportunities and identify best job matches, engage in educational planning and career development, fine-tune cover letters and resumes, and conduct mock interviews with the students. As one participant notes: “the instructor led me on a journey of discovery during which thoughts were focused, goals were narrowed.”

Carter, an internal Department of Defense coach who recently completed a graduate certificate in Executive and Leadership Coaching, began as an OPWL 516 coach in late 2017. Her recent “in the trenches” experience as a program graduate mixed with real-world coaching skills allows her to share practical advice with students. She explains “my hope is that every student that I work with comes away with a similar feeling—that they are ‘whole, perfect, and complete,’ and equipped with everything they need to succeed in the program and beyond.”

Jo Ann Fenner, Manager of Marketing and Outreach Services and Academic Advisor, indicates new as well as many mid- and executive-level students are showing continued interest in “skill-stretching activities and one-on-one coaching” like that offered through the OPWL 516 course.

A faculty research and support team composed of Drs. Becker, Giacumo, Steha, and Villachica work with Jo Ann Fenner as a “flight crew” to support the coaches. Together, coaches and the flight crew use survey and interview findings to shape the continued success of the course.

Getting Additional Instructional Design Experience Through Internships

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) advances professional local government worldwide through leadership, management, innovation, and ethics. The ICMA provides member support, publications, data and information, peer and results-oriented assistance, and training and professional development to more than 11,000 appointed city, town, and county leaders as well as other individuals and organizations throughout the world.

In Fall of 2018, Janet Emery (’03 IPT graduate) sponsored five OPWL students interning as instructional designers at ICMA—Nicole Boykin, Lisa Christen, Margaret “Peggy” Hiatt, D’Jeane Peters, and Elisabeth Skoro. Working as a virtual team from different locations throughout, and even outside, the country, Janet and her team of instructional designers created and delivered the requested e-learning modules to the ICMA.

This internship project came out of D’Jeane’s class project in OPWL 525 Rapid E-Learning Development with Dr. Giacumo. D’Jeane recalls “I had no idea I would be able to follow it to completion. After submitting the initial design to the client, I was able to work with Janet, an experienced instructional designer, and a team of OPWL students to polish the original design according to the needs of the client. In that process, I took my learning out of the classroom and into the nonprofit world, where I was able to experience firsthand the challenges and rewards of e-learning development. I learned how to work in a virtual team across many time zones, how to communicate with the client in their language, and how to develop a finished product that meets the needs of a resource-strapped organization. This valuable experience was something I was able to talk about in several job interviews and cover letters, and I know it will ultimately strengthen my resume as an e-learning designer and member of a virtual team.”

For the students, this internship project provided many lessons. The need for using an appropriate project management tool is one of them. The team used Trello as their project management tool. Peggy, who used it for the first time, was impressed with its ease of use. She also emphasizes the importance of team members having competence in using the selected tool and understanding the reason why it is being used.

One of the lessons-learned for Liz is the importance of clear formatting guidelines and brand standards to keep widely-dispersed workers on the same page to facilitate effective communication during the project. She points out that “even things that seem simple at the outset might not be so simple.”

For Nicole, this ICMA internship provided an opportunity to practice what she was learning in her OPWL classes in a safe, supportive environment. She says, “it was a priceless opportunity as I gained firsthand experience creating instruction that makes knowledge and skill acquisition more efficient, effective, and appealing.” She recommends that all OPWL students should consider participating in this type of a rewarding learning experience.
Four members of the United States Coast Guard (USCG), Brittany Poley, Rachel Stutt, Toni Tharpe, and Eduardo Valdez were awarded the USCG Educational Sabbatical in 2017. As part of their sabatical, they had several educational institutions to choose from and they chose to go to Boise State University! After successfully completing their master’s degree in OPWL by Summer 2018, all of them are now back to their duties.

**PURSUING A DOCTORAL DEGREE**

Ms. Linda Urban (left, ‘13 OPWL graduate and adjunct faculty) is pursuing her doctoral degree at Fielding Graduate University. Linda’s research integrates aspects of human and organizational systems. She is focusing on adult learning and development, systems thinking, and supporting change toward a more sustainable world.

Perri Kennedy (right, ’12 IPT graduate) is a Ph.D. candidate in Business at Capella University with an anticipated completion date of December 2019. Her interest in the intersection of research and practice was sparked while working as an IPT graduate assistant and continues in her dissertation research on the experiences of scholar-practitioners in HR roles. She is currently a learning scientist at The Boeing Company in Everett, Washington.

**I’M A MEMBER OF THE HONOR SOCIETY OF PHI KAPPA PHI!**

Sabrina Johnson, an OPWL student and Marketing/Training Consultant at Projectline, is now a member of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi. Membership is by invitation only and requires a nomination by a chapter. Graduate students must rank in the top 10% of their class.
ROBERTA DOMBROWSKI
LEADING LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS

As Roberta Dombrowski transitioned from developing traditional learning materials to e-learning, she wanted to add credentials expanding her professional development and project scope. In 2016, she enrolled in the OPWL program because of its unique breadth and depth. OPWL wasn’t just another instructional design program, but instead a mix of identifying performance gaps with a focus on digital learning. The program was a flexible and economical solution to obtaining additional credentials. She completed the Workplace E-Learning and Performance Support graduate certificate in 2018 and plans to complete her master’s degree in Summer 2019.

Roberta describes the OPWL program as a way to challenge herself and “has exposed me to fundamental learning theories and research from past experts within the industry.”

Concepts balanced with group projects that build relationships and exposure to different perspectives have helped Roberta to hone her craft and provided a place to share her unique industry experiences.

Currently, Roberta is Product Manager at Pluralsight leading the research, development, and marketing strategy for the Role IQ digital learning product. She is also an independent consultant on product development, user experiences, and learning strategies. Her passion for technology, skills gained from the OPWL program, and experience in the industry made her a perfect choice for the 2018 Elliott Masie’s 30 Under 30 award program for future leaders in the L & D community.

In the coming months, Roberta plans to finish her degree, expand her consulting business, and enjoy “just being” for a bit.

AUTUMN SCISCIANI
GROWING WITH PEOPLE WHO VALUE WHAT YOU KNOW

Autumn Scisciani is a 2018 OPWL graduate and recipient of the Professional Growth Award for students who have demonstrated exceptional professional growth during their time in the OPWL Program.

In 2014 as a full-time photographer and single mom, Autumn knew she needed a professional change that would allow for a more consistent schedule and benefits for her family, but still take advantage of her creative design skills and experience. She chose the OPWL program because she “fell in love with the idea of finding the best solution for the performance gap, whether that be training or non-training options (or both).” As a new student, Autumn approached the management team at her employer, Sonic Automotive, and “asked for any involvement possible so that I could learn from them, and I made sure to keep in contact while completing my coursework.”

After several internships and graduating with her master’s degree in 2018, Autumn was promoted to National Training and Organizational Development Manager for Sonic Automotive, a Fortune 300 company including over 100 car dealerships throughout the United States. In this position, she develops training, processes, and documentation for the new Subscription Services arm of the organization. Autumn explains, “I was hired for my position because of my education in analysis and my ability to use the tools and methods I was given in the program to isolate the performance issue and offer a varied range of targeted solutions. The program taught me to think outside the box and achieve real results that bring value to our team and the organization.”

Autumn has moved from industry outsider to a 6-figure national training management position in less than 4 years. She says “It’s all because of the knowledge and skills gained at Boise State. It has changed our lives and I’m so grateful!”

At Sonic Automotive, Autumn has found people that value what she knows and continues to learn from them. She hopes to move into a director position in the near future and continue to grow professionally!

“The coursework and assignments provided me with a safe environment to apply these theories on real life projects... I was immediately able to use what I was learning within my day to day role. This was tremendous! And I believe it expedited my learning experience and overall career trajectory.”

OPWL STUDENTS AND GRADUATE SPOTLIGHTS

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BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY MEETS KOREA UNIVERSITY

On May 2018, Dr. Soo Jeoung “Crystal” Han was invited to the Research Institute for Human Resource Development Policy at Korea University in South Korea to deliver a presentation on Industry 4.0 and Education 4.0. In her presentation, she focused on global challenges and how they may impact the education system and policy for Human Resource Development. She also presented several strategies and implications for future learning.

TWO DECADES OF LEARNING AND TEACHING AT BOISE STATE

Adjunct Professor, Ms. Carol Porter, started her master’s degree in IPT in 1996 while working full-time as a consultant in Canada. A few years later, she moved to the US with her husband and completed her degree in 2001. The following year, she was hired as adjunct faculty to teach a comprehensive exam prep class. Since then, she has taught several other courses including OPWL 536 Foundations of Organizational Performance and Workplace Learning and OPWL 535 Principles of Adult Learning. She is currently teaching OPWL 588 Library Skills for Research.

ENGINEERING PLUS

What do Boise State’s OPWL program and one of the college’s newest programs, Engineering Plus, have in common? Engineering Plus is an interdisciplinary undergraduate engineering degree. At its core is a commitment to engaging students and helping them hone essential workplace skills such as communication, problem solving, empathy, and teamwork while working on actual design challenges with clients. Dr. Vicki Stieha and her graduate assistant, Danielle Patterson, are developing hybrid learning modules designed to ensure students achieve the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology learning outcomes.

10-STEP EVALUATION

After teaching the OPWL 530 Evaluation class for more than a decade, Dr. Yonnie Chyung transformed her class notes into a 320-page textbook “10-Step Evaluation for Training and Performance Improvement” and had it published by Sage in 2018. This book is used as a textbook in her evaluation class.

DR. DIANE DORMANT’S GARDEN

Born in 1930, OPWL Adjunct Professor, Dr. Diane Dormant, already knew by her age of 10 that she wanted to pursue a doctorate degree. After finishing her undergraduate degree in English and a master’s degree in Psychology, she taught school for a while. Then, in 1969, she completed her Ph.D. in Instructional Systems Design from Indiana University.

After teaching at Indiana University for 25 years, she was settling into a relaxing retirement. However, around 2008, she received a phone call from Tony Marker, whom Diane has known way back since he was a paperboy delivering newspapers in her neighborhood. Tony was calling to ask her to teach an OPWL class in Change Management online, and she replied, “Absolutely NOT! I don’t know a thing about online teaching!” But, Tony persisted.

In rising to the challenge, Diane concluded that, “Although I taught for Indiana University for 25 years, during the 10 years I taught online for OPWL at Boise State, I was the best teacher that I had ever been in my career.” In addition to thinking about teaching differently, Diane said, “the OPWL students are IDEAL. They really want to learn, to invest in their learning, and truly have been a pleasure to know and teach.”

In 2011, she wrote “The Chocolate-Model of Change” as the direct result of a series of e-lectures developed for her OPWL online graduate course. In her acknowledgement, she wrote, “So, my first thanks are to the Boise State students who challenged and energized me and made my life more interesting and satisfying.” Diane retired from the OPWL program in 2018 to care for her garden and continue her writing.

DR. GIACUMO AND HER HUSBAND WELCOME BABY ALEXANDER

In March 2018, Dr. Lisa Giacumo and her husband, Mr. Jeroen Breman, welcomed their baby boy, Alexander. Just like his parents, Alexander already has an affinity towards technology. He tries to use computers and phones to capture his ideas any time those devices come within his reach!

RESEARCH AGREEMENT WITH DOT CORPORATION

In May 2018, Dr. Don Winiecki (left) met with Mr. Ki Kwang Sung (right), Chief of Engineering at DOT Corporation, South Korea, to initiate a research agreement with the company. DOT has developed refreshable braille technologies that are more power-efficient and cost about 1/10th as much as current systems. Winiecki will research tactile graphics and maps that can be incorporated into DOT devices.
We need your help to raise funds to begin offering scholarships to deserving OPWL scholars!

Every gift will make a difference and ask you to join us to raise scholarship funds for the learning and development leaders of the future! We invite all Broncos and friends to support the OPWL program through a generous donation.

Click “Give a gift to the OPWL scholarship fund” on the OPWL website homepage:

http://opwl.boisestate.edu/

Important Dates:

New student recommended Spring 2019 application deadline
Friday, November 30, 2018

Winter 2018 graduation dinner
Friday evening, December 14, 2018

Winter 2018 commencement
Saturday, December 15, 2018

Spring 2019 MS graduation and certificate completion application deadline
Friday, January 18, 2019

Spring 2019 graduation dinner
Friday evening, May 10, 2019

Spring 2019 commencement
Saturday, May 11, 2019

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