2021 ANNUAL REPORT
The Wharton Behavioral Lab
The Wharton Behavioral Lab opened the doors to our newly renovated space in Steinberg Hall-Dietrich Hall in 2021! As many parts of the university remained virtual this past year, we completed the installation of hardware, video, and software systems to create state-of-the-art lab rooms and break-out rooms.

The break-out rooms, are equipped to run individual studies (e.g., eye-tracking), dyadic studies (e.g., negotiations), and groups studies. And as the university transitions to mask-optional participation, the WBL is prepared to relaunch initiatives, such as facial coding, physio measures and taste stimuli in experiments. The Wharton Behavioral Lab facility and staff is an area of excellence at Wharton that is unmatched by any of our peers.

Through the pandemic, The Wharton Behavioral Lab remained a major force advancing Wharton scholarship. Though we were unable to run in-person studies during much of 2021, demand for online studies remained high. In 2021, The Wharton Behavioral Lab supported the research of 53 faculty across 8 Wharton departments. Reflecting this broad engagement, the Wharton Behavioral Lab supported 40 published articles and 112 working papers in 2021.

Finally, I would like to recognize the work of Sigal Barsade, a valued and long-serving member of our advisory board. We suffered a deep loss with her passing, and in addition to her wise counsel, she was an active and creative Wharton Behavioral Lab user, a colleague, and a friend.
New Facilities

Two 20-seat labs

Six break out rooms

State-of-the-art technology

Break-Out Room Network Cameras (Pan, Tilt, Zoom)

Break-Out Room Overhead Cameras
Prior to the Wharton Behavioral Lab (WBL), Wharton faculty spent a significant portion of their time recruiting participants and executing studies, thereby limiting their creative capacity to design and pose studies. At the same time, the School faced several challenges regarding behavioral research, such as recruiting new faculty in the field and allocating research dollars. In response to these growing challenges, Wharton created the WBL.

The WBL in its current form began in Spring 2005 with a single lab located in Jon M. Huntsman Hall (JMHH). The initial proposal estimated that the research volume would range between 5,000 and 14,000 participant-hours annually (with the lower number being the 2005 volume). In the first year, actual volume exceeded those estimates and a second location was added in Steinberg-Dietrich Hall (SHDH). This immediate high volume was interpreted as evidence that the WBL addressed a major deficiency in research support that had slowed the rate of research productivity and/or reduced the sample sizes used in behavioral research projects. In 2020, the on-campus volume was over 30,000 participant-hours and online volume was over 1,000,000 completed surveys/experiments. This growth since 2005 has resulted from increased numbers of faculty doing behavioral research and increased volume per researcher.

The WBL serves as a key to unlocking vast impact from the research of Wharton’s faculty. Since opening in 2005, the WBL has established itself as the preeminent laboratory of its kind, attracting faculty and doctoral students from around the world. The Wharton School is the leading place for behavioral research with over 55 faculty utilizing the WBL on a regular basis.

The WBL provides faculty and doctoral students a dedicated research space, experienced staff, and financial resources to support behavioral, business-related research. The scale of the WBL enables Wharton to efficiently and profoundly boost faculty research productivity.

“The WBL allows me to think much bigger in the questions I ask and the way I can find answers, build more consequence into my studies, gain more confidence in my findings, and ultimately, do research that stands to have a bigger impact.”

CAIT LAMBERTON, ALBERTO I. DURAN PRESIDENT’S DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR, PROFESSOR OF MARKETING
Meet the dedicated team members of The Wharton Behavioral Lab.

**Maurice Schweitzer**
Academic Director
Cecilia Yen Koo Professor
Professor of Operations, Information and Decisions
Professor of Management

**Mary Spratt**
Associate Director
Scheduling, Financials, Hiring/Staff Management, WBL Promotion

**Robert Botto**
IT Director
Lab hardware and software systems, Research programming support, Psychophysiological methods

**Bob Stewart**
Senior IT Support Specialist
Lab hardware and tech support, Qualtrics administrative support, Evaluation and implementation of new technologies

**Susan McCafferty**
Sr. Research Coordinator
Special Panels - Online Studies
Mturk/Prolific implementation, Field Studies, Reimbursements, Financials, Qualtrics liaison

**Emily Rosa**
Lead Lab Coordinator
Session coordination and implementation, RA hiring and training, Cash management

**Sophie Bartholomew**
Lab Coordinator
Session coordination and implementation, RA hiring and training,

**Lee Dandelias**
Research Assistant
Study implementation, Participant check-in/check-out
The Advisory Board includes leading behavioral science faculty from across the Wharton School. These scholars offer guidance, advice, and review large proposals along with Maurice Schweitzer, the academic director of the WBL.

Cait Lamberton
Alberto I. Duran President’s Distinguished Professor
Professor of Marketing

Sigal Barsade
Joseph Frank Bernstein Professor, Professor of Management

Michael Platt
James S. Riepe University Professor - Marketing, Psychology, Neuroscience

Judd Kessler
Howard Marks Associate Professor, Business Economics & Public Policy

Joseph Simmons
Dorothy Silberberg Professor of Applied Statistics
Professor Operations, Information and Decisions
11,967

COMPLETED SURVEYS

2021 saw a return to campus and the WBL operated in a hybrid situation. Most of our studies remained remote but we were able to welcome some participants back to the physical lab and in-person studies.

81

10 ON-CAMPUS + 71 REMOTE SESSIONS

A typical on-campus session includes up to 4 separate experiments delivering between 250 and 400 participants.

A session is a group of experiments that are run at the same time in the same location.
The Numbers - Specialized Panels

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF ONLINE STUDIES

The WBL reached over 1,000,000 participants conducting over 3,184 studies with online panels.

SPECIALIZED PANEL STUDIES

Researchers use specialized panels to target large sample sizes and reach specific target demographics.

Specialized panels include field studies, MTurk, Prolific and Qualtrics

16%

Human Subject Payments ($000s)

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS (completed surveys)
Researchers - Faculty Engagement

2021 Total Users by Department

![Bar chart showing the number of researchers by department for 2021. MKTG leads with 25, followed by OID and MGMT with 20 each.]

NOTE: MKTG continues to lead with 24 PIs followed closely behind by OID and MGMT with 19 and 18 respectively. Wharton faculty members sponsor almost all research done by doctoral students.

Even with the current health crisis we have seen high levels of engagement from our faculty. The total number of primary investigators for CY2021 was 71. This number is comprised of 53 faculty and 18 students spanning over 9 departments.

Based on current requests for on-campus and specialized samples we expect growth to continue in 2022.

2021-2020 Usage of WBL Services by User Type

![Bar chart showing the usage of WBL services by user type for 2021 and 2020. Wharton Faculty have the highest usage, followed by Other Faculty and Students.]

Note: Wharton Faculty includes Visiting Faculty and Post-docs.
Published Articles


17. Laurino Dos Santos, Henrique and Jonah Berger (2022), The Speed of Stories: Semantic Progression and Narrative Success, forthcoming *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*.


**Published Articles continued**


Published Articles continued


37. Toubia, Olivier, Jonah Berger, and Josh Eliashberg (2021), Quantifying the Shape of Stories Predicts Their Success, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 118(26).


**Published Articles and Working Papers Historical Data**

![Graph showing the number of Published Articles and Working Papers from 2010 to 2021](image)
Goals looking forward....

1. Increase the current high levels of productivity and efficiency in the on-campus labs and in specialized samples.

2. Obtain new sources of external financial support for the WBL.

3. Development and implementation of infrastructure software for quality control, participant characteristics database, and accounting.

4. Continue and increase IT and RA support of eye-tracking equipment, physiological equipment, and emotion coding software as easily used research tools.

5. Increase the number of Wharton faculty and graduate students using the WBL.

“WBL keeps Wharton at the cutting edge of experimental research in business schools.”

REBECCA SCHAUMBERG,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
OPERATIONS, INFORMATION AND DECISIONS