Oral Defense Announcement
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology with an emphasis in Industrial Organizational Psychology

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M.A. in Psychology, May, 2015, University of Missouri-St. Louis
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The Dreaded Performance Appraisal: Can the Process Ever be Comfortable?

Date: November 2, 2018
Time: 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
Place: 339 Stadler Hall

Abstract
Previous research has indicated that individuals dislike and resist the performance appraisal process. Fewer studies have examined reasoning for unintentional rating distortion that may result from a lack of training and clear understanding of how to effectively evaluate behaviors. Researchers have shown that the appraisal process is uncomfortable for raters, but empirical studies have yet to explore how to reduce this discomfort. Rater training research has revealed that trained raters have improved observational skills, a more precise vocabulary to describe behaviors, and improved rating accuracy. This study explored the relationship between performance appraisal discomfort and trait motivational factors (i.e., personality and self-efficacy) and rater behavior (i.e., leniency and accuracy), along with the impact of the experience of training. Additionally, this study investigated whether performance appraisal discomfort could be reduced after experiencing rater training (specifically, Frame-of-Reference training). Results revealed that individual difference variables (personality and self-efficacy) were not consistently related to ratings of discomfort; however, rater training was found to be an effective mechanism for reducing discomfort with making performance ratings. Future research ideas and practical implications are discussed.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
John Meriac, Ph.D. (Chair)
Stephanie Merritt, Ph.D.
Jim Breaugh, Ph.D.
Nancy Singer, Ph.D.