

WHARTON BEHAVIORAL LAB



Wharton
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

Inspire.
Achieve.
Scale.

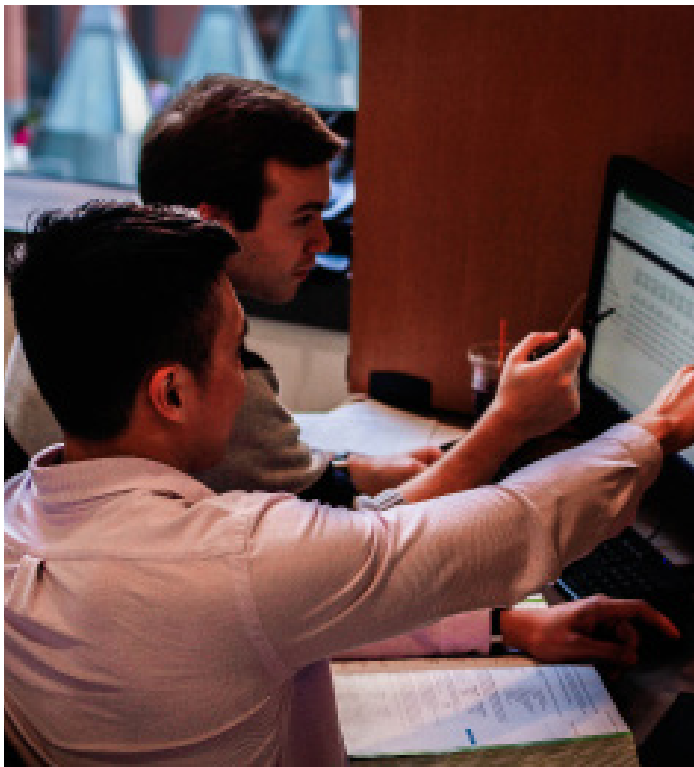


HISTORY

Wharton Behavioral Lab (WBL) serves as a key to unlocking vast impact from the research of Wharton's faculty. Since opening in 2005, 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 45 faculty utilizing WBL on a regular basis.

Prior to 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 issues, Wharton created WBL.

WBL provides faculty and doctoral students a dedicated research environment to test their theories on business-related topics as it has the infrastructure to execute. In that way, research productivity increases with minimized operational costs of both time and money. WBL scales the tools and learning technologies for behavioral and experimental studies so that all Wharton behavioral researchers benefit.



WBL directly contributes to Wharton's reputation for excellence in academic research and helps attract and retain the very best scholars. The primary services provided include:

- ➔ Maintaining and updating data collection facilities and equipment.
- ➔ Providing substantial participant pools, including a panel of 4,000+ students and other members of the Penn community, and a wide variety of commercially provided online panels.
- ➔ Managing efficient staff for conducting state-of-the-art experimental research.

The initial proposal for WBL estimated a research volume between 5,000 and 14,000 participant-hours annually. In the first year, however, actual volume exceeded those estimates and a second location on campus was added. By 2019, the on-campus volume was over 32,200 participant-hours and online volume was over 606,000 completed surveys and experiments.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS
(Completed Surveys)

2016
288,004

2017
333,381

2018
538,674

2019
606,077+

“The Wharton Behavioral Lab is the singular best behavioral lab in the world. Our staff, our panels, and our protocols set the standard for behavioral research worldwide.”

MAURICE SCHWEITZER

WBL FACULTY DIRECTOR

CECILIA YEN KOO PROFESSOR OF OPERATIONS, INFORMATION AND DECISIONS



GOALS



Enhance research productivity by minimizing operational costs, in both time and money.



Provide the latest tools and learning technologies for behavioral and experimental studies.



Create infrastructure for all Wharton behavioral researchers to maximize capabilities and outcomes.

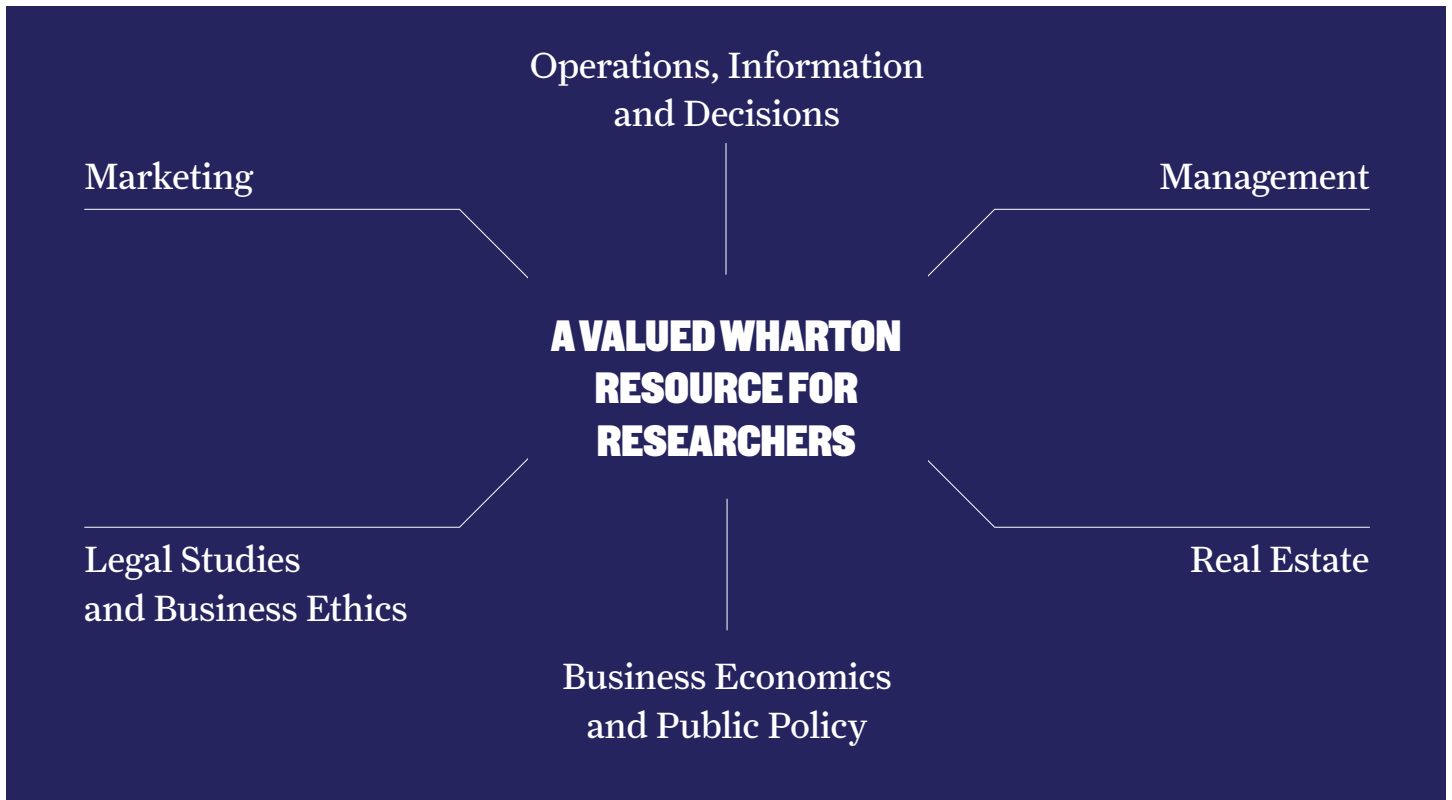
WBL provides the rocket fuel for faculty to transform their ideas into real data that can be studied to answer their pressing research questions. The direct impact this resource has on faculty research includes:

- ➔ Decreases time spent on designing studies, resulting in more time for execution. WBL manages each phase of the studies, including participant recruitment, compensation, and administration.
- ➔ Ensures integrity of studies by maintaining the anonymity of participants.
- ➔ Provides experts to navigate the changing complex standards for studies along with the ability to scale. For example, studies that used to enroll twenty managers now require 200.
- ➔ Increases the ability to support the growth of behavioral research in business.
- ➔ Creates a virtuous cycle in which Wharton research influences fields of study and business processes thereby creating the need for continued studies. Wharton has always excelled in this area and the Behavioral Lab provides the mechanism to continue that excellence.

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

REBECCA SCHAUMBERG

Assistant Professor, Operations, Information and Decisions



UNIQUE IDENTIFIERS

Excellent Pool of Resources

WBL services include maintaining and updating research facilities; offering substantial participant pools; and staffing efficiency in a shared asset for all faculty and students doing behavioral research.

Size of Data Collection

Wharton faculty can ask more ambitious questions, knowing there will be large, robust data collection to support relevant research. The magnitude of resources available accelerates faculty exploration of business-related issues, giving them the opportunity to “get there first” with their research.

State-of-the-Art Research Capabilities

WBL provides the space and tools for faculty to conduct interactional research, such as having participants use eye tracking devices or negotiate with each other. Such studies can take place simultaneously with the high volume of online research.

Scale and Versatility

WBL enables researchers to be more productive by helping them scale studies, be versatile in study design and execution, and conduct complex research. As a result, researchers are able to contribute findings in a more robust manner.

“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*

STUDY EXAMPLES

“Outsourcing Inspiration”

Adam Grant, PhD

The Saul P. Steinberg Professor of Management

One of my favorite experiments in the Wharton Behavioral Lab examined how leaders can “outsource inspiration” to the end users who benefit from an organization’s products and services. We found that participants did better work and were more helpful when they heard from a patient who appreciated the company’s work, rather than from a leader — as long as the company was known as caring. Although we usually look to leaders to motivate, employees are often skeptical of their ulterior motives, and our research revealed that if leaders want to make a compelling case that the work benefits others, they are sometimes better off bringing in people who have been served by it.

“Targeted Ads”

Alice Moon

Assistant Professor of Operations, Information and Decisions

Targeted advertisements allow companies to market to those most likely to buy their products and allow consumers to benefit from personalized ads. But at what cost? In studies run through WBL, because targeted (compared to non-targeted) ads increase the salience that companies have their personal data, people are more concerned about their data privacy and security after seeing a targeted (versus non-targeted) ad. As a result, people are more likely to change their privacy settings after seeing targeted (rather than non-targeted) ads. Our findings suggest that marketers using targeted ads should be wary of the potential psychological costs to consumers.

“Economic Injustice”

Nina Strohming

Assistant Professor, Legal Studies

I, along with Professor Amanda Shanor (a legal scholar in my department), have been studying how people react to economic injustice. We are interested if transparency about the rules (what is sometimes called “procedural justice”) pacifies acceptance of unfair economic outcomes. In one experiment, we told participants we would be unable to pay them the agreed to amount; for half of the participants, though, we gave a more thorough explanation of the reason for doing so. We then measured attitudes about the fairness of this outcome and American wealth distribution more generally.

“Eye Tracking in Decision-Making”

Michael Platt

James S. Riepe University Professor

Faculty Director of Wharton Neuroscience

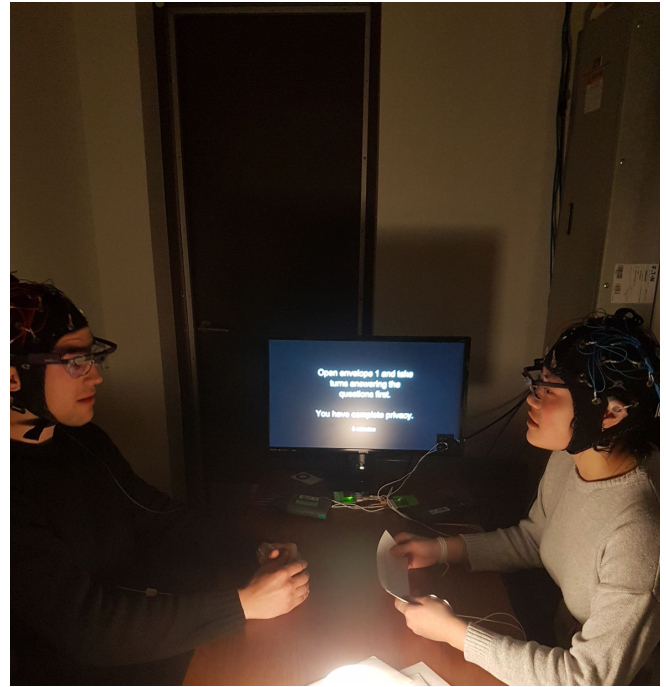
Shakespeare wrote that “the eyes are the window to the soul.” We’ve found that they’re also the window to the mind of the decision maker. In studies run through WBL, we offered people real gambles of winning and losing money while simultaneously tracking their eyes and measuring the size of their pupils. We found that people who were more likely to reject a gamble spent more time looking at the possible loss, whereas people who focused more on potential gains were more likely to accept the bet. These biomarkers of the decision process offer the potential to help shape what people choose. Financial service companies, for example, could help customers accept more risk by physically emphasizing potential windfalls over possible losses.

THE LATEST TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Wharton Behavioral Lab enables researchers to maximize new technology and conduct pioneering research.

WBL provides access to large subject pools at Penn and across the globe as well as targeted samples, such as human resources managers. Innovative technology includes:

- Screen-based eye tracking
- Heart rate and skin conductance sensors
- Network camera systems
- Automated facial expression and emotion analysis
- Behavioral coding software



Participants take part in a Wharton Neuroscience study on interpersonal relationships wearing eye tracking glasses and wireless electroencephalograms.

“We have arguably the best behavioral lab in the country. It is a wonderful place for students to get research experience in the form of honors theses, which they use, and more broadly to our undergraduates who take part in behavioral lab as participants, they get a really good sense of the actual research process and one way that knowledge at Wharton is created.”

**SIGAL BARSADE
JOSEPH FRANK BERNSTEIN
PROFESSOR OF MANAGEMENT**





BENEFITS

- ➔ With a dedicated staff, advanced technology, and access to vast populations and data sets, WBL makes transforming research ideas into tested hypotheses easy.
- ➔ WBL creates the ideal research environment. There are subtle ways that a researcher can influence results. The ideal research situation is a double blind one where neither the subject nor the researcher know the conditions.
- ➔ WBL can collect large sample sizes in a short amount of time (over 300 participants per day).

TESTIMONIALS

“WBL has been a large driving force behind my research productivity at Wharton. It is one of the best resources available for both faculty members and PhD Students.”

MARISSA SHARIF, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MARKETING

“WBL allows us to conduct research extremely efficiently. After developing a new research design, through WBL we can collect data from hundreds of participants within weeks – something that in other institutions may take half a year. This is an invaluable resource for our scientific progress.”

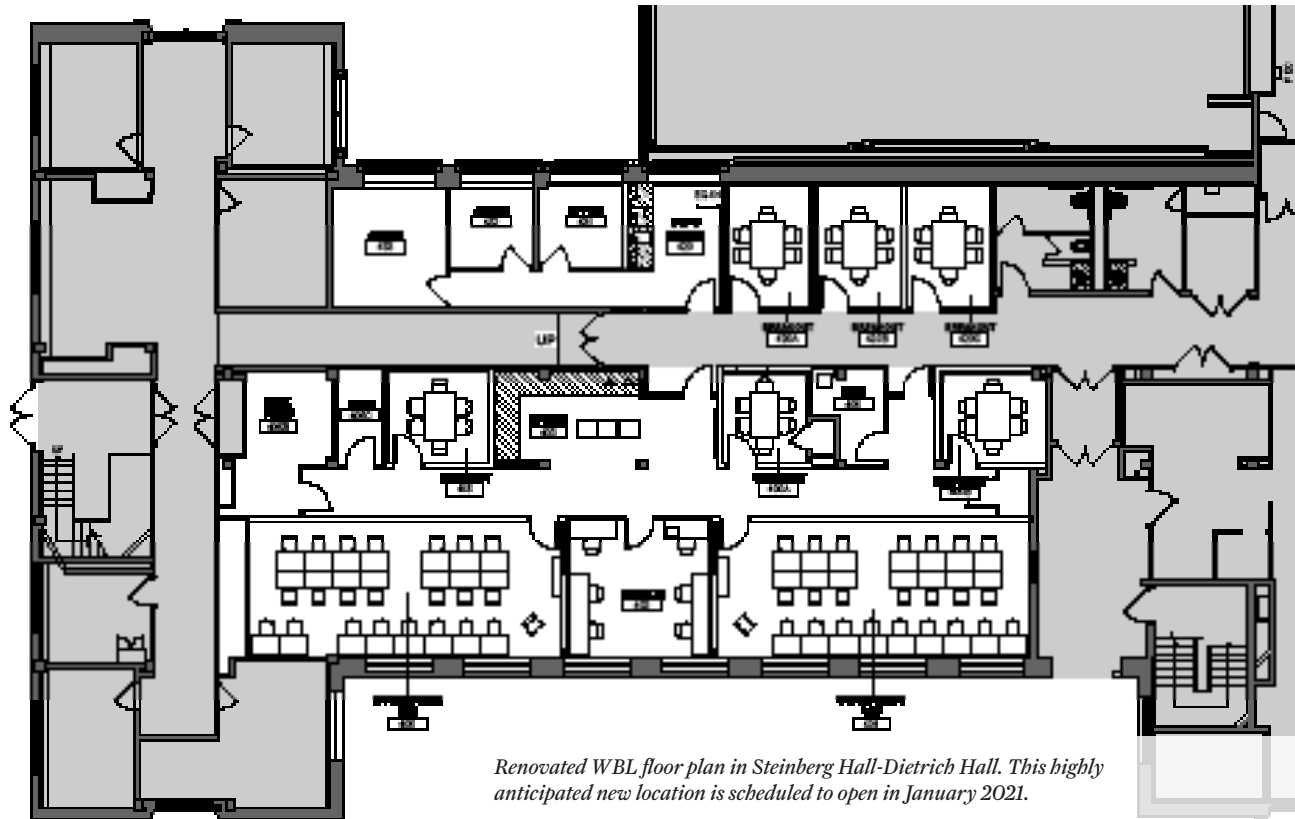
VERA LUDWIG, PHD

“Faculty productivity and knowledge creation is amplified by WBL. It makes it much easier to conduct research.”

JONAH BERGER, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MARKETING

“WBL has made my most ambitious research possible. It's an incredible resource for faculty and doctoral students and makes us the envy of all our peers at other elite business schools.”

KATY MILKMAN, EVAN C. THOMPSON ENDOWED TERM CHAIR FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING



Renovated WBL floor plan in Steinberg Hall-Dietrich Hall. This highly anticipated new location is scheduled to open in January 2021.

WBL'S NEW LOCATION EXPANDS ITS IMPACT

Computer Labs

Two 20-seat labs accommodate large-scale experiments.

Breakout Rooms

Six smaller rooms with high-tech audio and video recording are used for dyadic, small group negotiation and multi-party decision-making.

Participant Waiting Area

A separate area provides quick turnaround between studies, minimizing disruptions in nearby offices and classrooms.

Check-in/Observation Room

Having this dedicated space supports operational efficiency.

Technology

State-of-the-art integrated audio, visual and physio devices.

MIGRATING TO A VIRTUAL MODEL DURING COVID-19

With only a two week disruption, WBL adapted its systems to work with a popular survey platform to run studies online. WBL was able to ensure accountability and high levels of data quality. This platform will help WBL expand its capacity in the future.

Leveraging new technology

Learning new software systems offered the WBL team the opportunity to get research back on its feet quickly. Staff can work behind the scenes to ready the experiments and send them directly to the pool of participants.

Group studies via Zoom

Zoom allows the WBL team to conduct experiments in small groups using virtual breakout rooms.

INSIDE THE WHARTON BEHAVIORAL LAB

COMPUTER LAB



BREAKOUT ROOM



PARTICIPANT WAITING AREA



CHECK-IN/OBSERVATION ROOM



ACADEMIC ADVISORY BOARD

The WBL academic advisory board is composed of leading behavioral science scholars from the Wharton School. The advisory board meets regularly with the faculty director to help WBL realize its vision: to be the world's best behavioral lab, supporting research and creating new insights for the practice of business.



Sigal Barsade – Management

Joseph Frank Bernstein Professor of Management

Professor Barsade is an award winning researcher and teacher whose academic expertise enables her to integrate cutting edge research tools and knowledge into practical use. She has published in the top academic research journals in her field, and has served on the editorial boards of the *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* and *Organization Science*.



Judd Kessler – Business Economics & Public Policy

Associate Professor of Business Economics and Public Policy

Professor Kessler received a BA in Economics from Harvard University in 2004, an MPhil in Economics from Cambridge University in 2005, and his PhD in Business Economics from Harvard University in 2011. Kessler uses a combination of laboratory and field experiments to answer questions in Public Economics, Behavioral Economics, and Market Design.



Cait Lambertson – Marketing

*Alberto I. Duran President's Distinguished Professor
Professor of Marketing*

Professor Lambertson specializes in consumer psychology and behavior, focusing on positive behavior change in education, finance, wellness, and the sharing economy. She has received numerous awards, including the Erin Anderson Award, given to the American Marketing Association's top emerging female scholar and mentor.



Michael Platt – Marketing, Psychology, Neuroscience

James S. Riepe University Professor

Professor Platt has appointments in the Department of Neuroscience in the Perelman School of Medicine, the Department of Psychology in the School of Arts and Sciences, and the Department of Marketing in the Wharton School. He is a former president of the Society for Neuroeconomics, publishes in top-tier scientific journals, and has been featured in prominent TV, radio, print, and online media. He is known for asking some of the most challenging questions in 21st century neuroscience — and conceiving innovative ways to find the answers.



Joseph Simmons – Operations, Information and Decisions

Professor of Operations, Information and Decisions

Professor Simmons has two primary areas of research. The first explores the psychology of judgment and decision-making, with an emphasis on understanding and fixing the errors and biases that plague people's judgments, predictions, and choices. The second focuses on identifying and promoting easy-to-adopt research practices that improve the integrity of published findings. He is also an author of *Data Colada*, an online resource that attempts to improve our understanding of scientific methods and evidence.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Wharton Behavioral Lab delivers best-in-class resources to more than 50 faculty to advance their scholarship and contribute data-driven insights to reshape business practices. As demand for these resources continues to rise, Wharton seeks philanthropic partners to provide a steady source of funding for the lab. A gift of \$250,000+ provides critical funding for Wharton Behavioral Lab to grow in the following ways:

- ➔ Enhance its hardware, software and procedures to build the infrastructure needed for the research of tomorrow. New equipment, such as eye tracking, physiological measures, EEG, and emotion coding software, deepen research impact.
- ➔ Expand its capabilities to conduct interdisciplinary research and significantly increase the number of subjects to support massive online studies.
- ➔ Pilot innovative research methods using virtual reality technology to simulate novel environments and tracking real-time interpersonal reactions. Funding will help WBL create access to specialty panels of participants, such as financial traders and oncologists.

ENDOWED GIFTS TO THE WHARTON SCHOOL

An endowed gift provides sustained funding that transforms a program or initiative. This level of philanthropy enables Wharton to confidently launch new initiatives and plan for future activities or address immediate needs.

TERM GIFTS TO THE WHARTON SCHOOL

Term funding provides greater financial support upfront than an endowed gift and funding is spent down over a period of years.

Typically philanthropic commitments are paid over a period of three to five years.

To learn more about supporting the Wharton Behavioral Lab, please contact Wharton External Affairs: +1.215.898.8479 or external.affairs@wharton.upenn.edu



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