



PSO Newsletter

January 2025

Our newsletter this quarter features

- Partner publications
- Professional activities
- PSO 2024 Year in Review
- New partners

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Partner Publications

Steering a Path Toward Cultural Change: Emerging and Enduring Characteristics of Policing Cultures in the UK

Sarah Charman, University of Portsmouth

This article examines the extent to which early ethnographic writings on the everyday realities of policing reflect the cultures of today. It also examines the potential and the desire for both continued research in this area and for cultural change itself. It suggests that the tendency towards conformity within policing—in terms of both conforming to organizational working practices and norms and conforming to informal occupational cultures—puts pressure on everyone within the policing organization to “fit in,” restricting difference, challenge, and ultimately, significant change. It concludes that a better understanding of the deep roots of occupational cultures within policing and an appreciation of both its benefits and appeal is necessary for a whole organization approach to reform.

Police Recruitment through an Intergroup Communication Lens: A Randomized Experiment

Shawn L. Hill, University of California, Santa Barbara; Laura Brimbal, Texas State University; Edward R. Maguire, Arizona State University; Eve Stephens, University of Texas Police Department

This work explores whether “recruitment materials that portray police officers as individuals who are relatable, and who share commonalities with potential candidates” can help attract a more diverse applicant pool by helping change attitudes toward policing. The three sets of tested recruitment materials featured a female police officer (1) discussing how she felt about her job, (2) describing the profession in stereotypical terms such as the intensity of chasing down a suspect, or (3) portraying officers in less stereotypical but more relatable terms. The materials did not affect attitudes toward the police among the college students to whom they were distributed. The materials describing policing in more relatable terms, however, did affect the students’ interest in working in policing. The findings

suggest police recruitment materials should “seek to depict police officers in a manner that helps the intended applicant pool to identify with” the depictions of the materials.

Navigating Entry: The Role of Exposure and Career Fit Negotiation in Women’s Pathways to Policing in the United States

Sam S. Clinkinbeard, University of Nebraska at Omaha; Rachael M. Rief, University of North Texas; Trisha N. Rhodes, University of Nebraska at Omaha; Lexi E. Goodijohn, University of Nebraska at Omaha

This research features interviews of 47 women in law enforcement about their pathways into policing. Two primary themes emerged from the interviews: career discovery through exposure to the field and negotiating career fit. Exposure through interactions with role models, hands-on experiences, and media portrayals, provided a peek into policing. Such exposure also helped these officers later navigate career fit concerns as they faced questions about their characteristics, values, and belonging. The research highlights the need for policing organizations to create meaningful connections with potential candidates and to help them align policing careers with diverse aspirations, values, and personal circumstances. Police organizations must also continue focusing on cultural and structural changes to accept and support diverse integration.

Patrol Officer Activity by Single- versus Double-crewed Status: The Call-related Output of One-officer and Two-officer Patrol Units

Rylan Simpson, Simon Fraser University; Leigh Grossman, Oakland Police Department
Among the longstanding debates in police staffing is whether single-crewed (i.e., single-officer) or double-crewed (i.e., two-officer) units are more optimal for patrolling. To examine this question, this research reviews electronic police records from the Oakland (CA) Police Department. They find the call-related output of single- and double-crewed units is more similar than different but note that double-crewed units might handle more serious calls for service than single-crewed units do.

Pioneering Integration and Leadership in Policing

Tara Hall, Mesa (AZ) Police Department; Tanya Meisenholder, New York University
Civilians comprise more than one-third of employees in general-purpose police agencies in the United States. They also comprise an increasing number of police leaders. This article discusses the benefits and challenges of integrating civilian professional staff into police agency leadership.

Finding Success from Within

Ashleigh N. Wojslawowicz, Charleston County (SC) Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
Police agencies, Ashleigh Wojslawowicz writes, may have within the expertise they need to improve their operations. Wojslawowicz writes of her experience working with internal expertise at the Charleston (SC) Police Department, and discusses the processes of identifying where to innovate, how to evaluate, and anticipating success, as well as how to integrate nonsworn resources.

Community Relations, Workplace Stress, and Well-being in the Context of Mass Demonstrations, Defunding, and Anti-police Sentiment

Jacqueline M. Drew, Griffith University; Sherri Martin, Fraternal Order of Police

This work presents results of a survey among U.S. law enforcement personnel, with a specific focus on stress and well-being. The survey results provide insights on workplace and community influences that are causing significant harm to police. The authors draw on the survey to discuss strategies police agencies and their leaders may use to reform police organizations and create healthier workplaces.

Broken Promises in Policing: Understanding Leadership, Procedural Justice and Psychological Health through the Lens of Psychological Contract Breach

Jacqueline M. Drew, Griffith University; Chantal Chevroulet, Griffith University

This research tests the role of psychological contract breach in explaining the relationship between leadership style and procedural justice, burnout and psychological distress. Drawing from a survey of 1,763 Australian police, the study offers insights for police agencies seeking to positively impact, through the actions of their leaders, the performance and psychological health of officers.

Routledge International Handbook of Policing Crises and Emergencies

Editors: Gary Cordner, Baltimore (MD) Police Department; Martin Wright, University of South Wales

This handbook explores occasions when the police are faced with a crisis and must continue to serve. Its sections include coverage of policing disasters, public health emergencies, political protest, terror and conflict, mass violence, and extreme crises and emergencies. Each section has a variety of international case studies examining best practice in the policing context, together with a chapter on theory and concepts.

PSO Perspective—Leaders and Leavers: The Impact of Poor Leadership on Police Attrition

Sarah Charman, University of Portsmouth; Jemma Tyson, University of Portsmouth

The number of voluntary resignations among police officers in England and Wales continues to rise, overtaking the number of retirements. At the heart of this increase is a sense of "organizational injustice." This MSU PSO Perspective explores this phenomenon through officers' perceptions of poor leadership and absence of "voice." Correcting the problem, the authors suggest, will require "creating a culture in which a multiplicity of voices can be heard," as well as command that can embrace "organizational ambidexterity."

PSO Perspective—Professional Staff: Job Satisfaction and the Impact on Police Staffing

Tanya Meisenholder, New York University

In this PSO Perspective, Tanya Meisenholder discusses civilians and police staffing. While civilians have historically had a significant role in policing, Meisenholder writes that they have not been fully embraced as a solution to staffing challenges, nor has their job satisfaction been a concern for many agencies. Meisenholder considers ways to improve the workplace for civilians, allowing for better integration and opportunities to address staffing challenges.

PSO Perspective—Prioritizing Police Recruitment Tactics Based on Performance and Need

Jeremy M. Wilson, Michigan State University; Clifford A. Grammich, Birdhill Research and Communications; Ethan Humphrey, Michigan State University

Police agencies may employ a variety of tactics to improve their recruitment processes, and specifically to increase their number of officers. Yet tactics vary in how they perform across different dimensions, and in their effects on other agency goals. In selecting tactics, agencies should be particularly mindful of those with multiple effects and choose those likely to produce the combination of effects they need.

Professional Activities

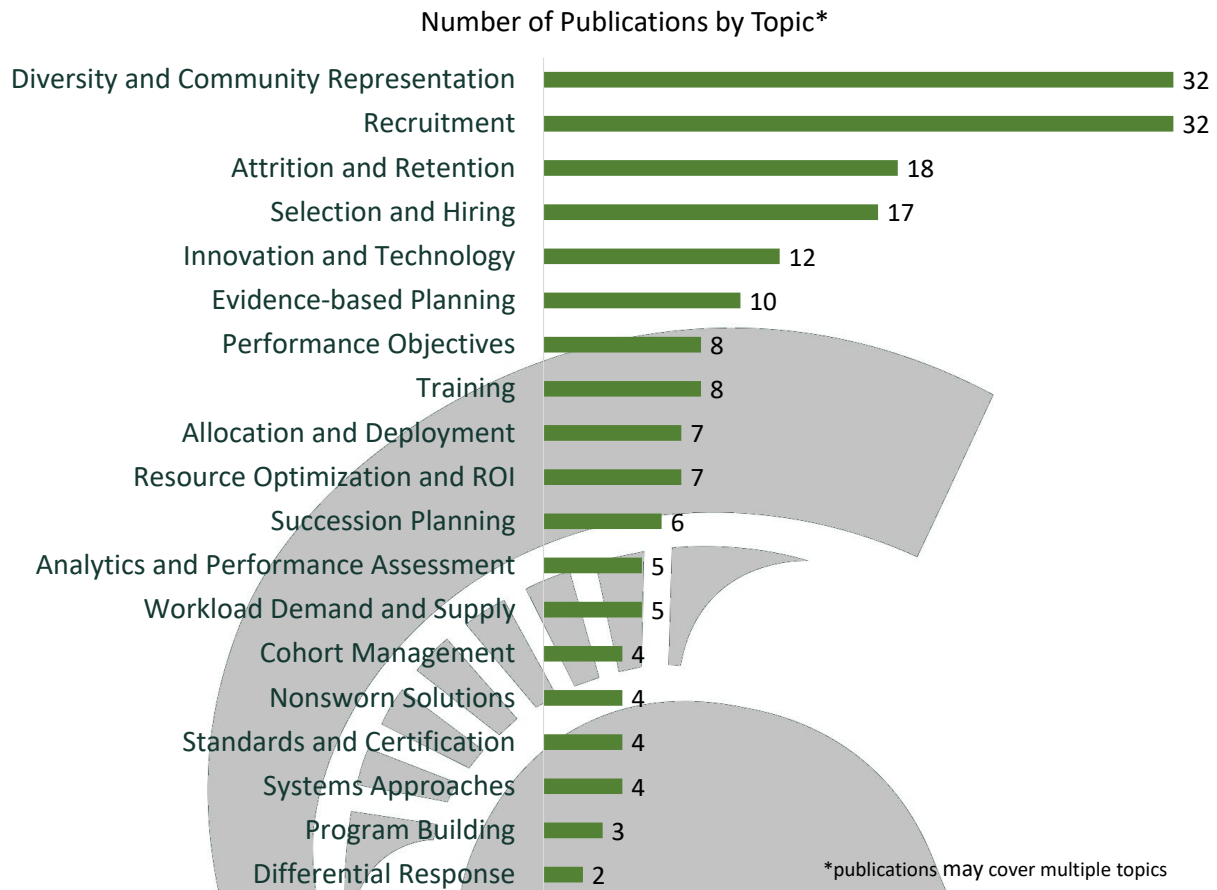
PSO Partners to Present Findings on Recruitment Tactics to IACP PRAS

Four PSO members—Jeremy Wilson, Tiana Gaudette, Ethan Humphrey, and Rosa Rivera—will present ongoing research on critical staffing challenges faced by police agencies across the United States, focusing on diversity and specialized skills, to an upcoming webinar of the International Association of Chiefs of Police—Police Research Advancement Section on Monday, January 27, at 3 p.m. ET. The webinar will review findings from a media analysis of staffing trends, a practitioner evaluation of 237 recruitment tactics, and an assessment of organizational components for effective recruitment. To register, see https://theiacp-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_BIKQwhwbT9a57HRe0pp5_w#/registration.

PSO 2024 Year in Review

Through nearly 50 publications, and a roughly equal number of presentations at academic and professional conferences, as well as media discussions, the Michigan State University Police Staffing Observatory (PSO) and its Partners advanced the field of policing research in several areas in 2024. Much of this work focused on core staffing topics such as recruitment, community representation, attrition and retention, and selection and hiring. Other topics included training, performance objectives, resource optimization, nonsworn solutions, systems approaches, and differential response. The figure below indicates the number of publications PSO Partners had in each of the topics shown in 2024.

PSO Partners Published 46 Works on Topics Across the Staffing Spectrum in 2024



The nearly 50 PSO Partners comprise a global collaborative of academics, scholars, practitioners, and students working with Michigan State University to promote evidence-based police workforce research, strategy, and operations. Their work spans the globe, with PSO Partners in 2024 analyzing staffing issues in seven nations. Examples of such work include career progression of female officers in Australia, education and police staffing in Iceland, police leadership in England, and recruitment tactics in the United States.

In 2024, PSO Partners Analyzed Staffing Issues in Seven Nations, Offering Important Global Insight on Workforce Planning



Australia



Iceland



United Kingdom



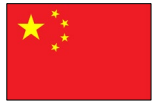
Canada



New Zealand



United States of America



China

To ensure their research findings reach the widest possible audience, PSO Partners seek a variety of venues for their work. In 2024, this included publications in academic journals such as *Criminology* and *Police Quarterly*, through organizations such as Michigan State University and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, and in professional and general interest publications such as *Police Chief* and *The Conversation*.

In 2024, PSO Partners Widely Shared Staffing Lessons by Publishing in 19 Different Venues

Academic Journals

- Criminology
- International Journal of Police Science and Management
- Journal of Contemporary Ethnography
- Journal of Criminal Justice
- Journal of Experimental Criminology
- Justice Quarterly
- Leadership and Behaviors for Effective Policing
- Policing: A Journal of policy and Practice
- Policing: An International Journal
- Police Quarterly
- The Political Quarterly

Organizations

- Michigan State University
- RTI International
- U.S. Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services

Professional and General Publications

- Applied Police Briefings
- The Conversation
- Michigan Police Chief
- Police Chief
- Police1

For a list of MSU PSO works published by year, see <https://cj.msu.edu/research-excellence/pso/pso-publications.html>.



New Partners

The PSO welcomes three new partners: Rylan Simpson, Jenn Rineer, and Nathan Cronin.



Rylan Simpson is an Assistant Professor in the School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University. He received his Ph.D. in Criminology, Law and Society from the University of California, Irvine in 2019. He conducts research related to public perceptions of police, police organizations, and police effectiveness using a variety of methods, including experimental and quantitative analysis.



Jenn Rineer is an expert on the health, well-being, and performance of employees and organizations. She is a program director and research psychologist in RTI International's Center for Public Safety and Resilience. She currently leads a National Institute of Justice (NIJ) project on service-oriented policing. She previously led an NIJ project on recruiting women into policing.



Nathan Cronin is a doctoral student in the MSU School of Criminal Justice, currently assigned as a graduate assistant to Dr. Jeff Rojek. His research interests include police retention and morale, policing on tribal reservations, rural policing, police K9 units, and fostering researcher-practitioner partnerships. He holds a master's degree from Sam Houston State University in Criminal Justice and Criminology.

For further information on MSU PSO Partners, see <https://cj.msu.edu/research-excellence/ps0/ps0-team.html>.

Newsletter Archive

Our newsletters are online. Click [here](#) to read the most recent or previous issues.

About the Michigan State University Police Staffing Observatory

The Police Staffing Observatory (PSO) is a global collaborative of academics, scholars, practitioners, and students working with Michigan State University to promote evidence-based police workforce research, strategy, and operations. Its primary aims are to advance police workforce knowledge and its application by

- Conducting timely and innovative research on critical aspects of a wide-range of police staffing issues, resulting in scholarly and practitioner-oriented publications

- Creating a venue for the network of police staffing scholars to share opportunities, discuss ideas, and enable collaborations
- Facilitating researcher-practitioner partnerships and technical assistance
- Serving as a repository and dissemination vehicle for the research of collaborators so that it is easily discoverable by practitioners and others.

Through its facilitation of research and outreach, the Police Staffing Observatory is a community of science that ultimately serves as a valuable resource for the community of practice.

