Creating a Histogram Overlay

A histogram overlay from multiple populations can be created using a number of techniques. This quick start guide describes a way to overlay histograms using Word and PowerPoint. A similar technique will work with other third party software including Paint and Photoshop but some of the specific options will vary. It is possible to create overlaid histograms in IDEAS by merging the two data files, opening that merged file in IDEAS, and creating a histogram using two or more populations, but this method will be less labor intensive.

To Overlay Histograms in PowerPoint or Word

1.) In IDEAS format the two histograms to a identical X,Y scales.
2.) Select contrasting colors for the two histograms.
   A.) Go to analysis drop down menu.
   B.) Select populations.
   C.) Change the white mode colors.
3.) Select white mode in IDEAS using the button in the workspace tool bar.
4.) Copy the graph without statistics to the clipboard.
5.) Paste the graph into Word or PowerPoint.
6.) Follow steps 2 through 5 for the second histogram.
7.) In Word set the transparent color to white.
   A.) Select the top histogram.
   B.) Open the “picture tools” tab.
   C.) Select the Colors or Recolor option.
   D.) Chose “set transparent color”.
   E.) Using the selection tool, click on the white area of the top histogram (anything white should now be transparent).
   F.) If you have difficulty doing this, cut and paste the histogram back into the document using paste special and choosing picture.
8.) Align the two histograms on top of each other.
   A.) Control select both histograms.
   B.) Go to the picture tools tab.
   C.) Select the alignment tool.
   D.) Chose align center.
   E.) Then align middle
   F.) Use Group to keep the image together (the two histograms should be precisely aligned and both visible).