

Psychological Assessment Course Syllabus ~ Winter 2009

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Office Hours: By appointment

Classroom: Straub 143
Lecture: T, 9 - 12

Overview:

This course begins the process of developing competence in psychological assessment, thereby providing a foundation for future clinical coursework, practica, and supervised work experiences. We will cover basic assessment of cognitive functioning; selected measures of psychosocial, emotional, and personality functioning; ethical and cultural issues associated with psychological assessment; case formulation and integrative report writing; and the principles of psychological measurement (including reliability, validity, norms, and standard scores).

By the end of the course, it is expected that students will master the following:

1. Basic understanding of principles of psychological measurement, including reliability, validity, and standardization.
2. Competent administration, scoring, and interpretation of the Wechsler scales, the PAI, the MMPI, and selected neuropsychological measures
3. Greater awareness of professional and ethical issues related to the practice of psychological assessment.
4. Greater awareness of assessment issues with culturally diverse populations.
5. Ability to communicate the results of an intellectual assessment orally and in writing.

Class Participation

Students are expected to be active and informed participants. Group discussion and hands-on activities, rather than instructor lecture, comprise the bulk of in-class sessions. This class has high expectations of the students, and will involve a certain level of clinical commitment, but the goal is that the considerable practical benefits of a more rigorous training in assessment will offset this.

Attendance

Attendance is required for all class meetings. If you are unable to attend, please let me know in advance. Repeated absences will affect your grade.

Assigned Readings

There are a number of suggested readings for this course, which optimally should be completed prior to coming to class. Each reading has been chosen with the demands of a hectic graduate student schedule in mind. Carefully reading the materials before class will help you be more familiar with the breadth of material and ultimately facilitate your mastery of the necessary clinical skills.

Homework

In addition to readings, there will be occasional ungraded class assignments which will be used to illustrate principles of assessment for the next class. Although these assignments are not formally graded, they are not optional and failure to complete them will result in deductions to your participation grade.

Ethical Responsibilities

It is expected that all students will conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner. Confidentiality is of the highest priority. Individuals being tested or interviewed are to be treated with respect. All testing and interviewing must be done in the Psychological Clinic. It is the responsibility of the student to inform Dr. Mendle of any situation which presents an ethical dilemma or which threatens the well-being of any volunteer or client.

Grading

In order to ensure clinical competency, this course will have a series of graded, hands-on homework assignments. Final grades for the course will be assessed based on the following criteria:

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|---|-----|
| 1. Administer WAIS-III to class partner | 5% |
| 2. WAIS-III scoring exercise | 5% |
| 3. Administer WAIS-III to student volunteer, score, and write report | 20% |
| 4. MMPI practice write-up | 5% |
| 5. PAI practice write-up | 5% |
| 6. Administer WAIS-III and MMPI/PAI to student volunteer/UTS referral, score, write up report, and provide feedback | 30% |
| 7. Class participation | 20% |

January 6

Introduction, Ethics, Principles of Tests, History of Tests, Intelligence

OPTIONAL HW: TAKE MMPI AND PAI AT HOME

This is only if you are curious about yourself; it's not required and it doesn't have to be done before next week. You SHOULD do it before we learn about the tests, however.

January 13

Introduction to WAIS-III Administration

Suggested reading:

Essentials of Wais-III Assessment, pp. 15 - 27

January 20

WAIS-III Administration, continued

Suggested reading:

Essentials of Wais-III Assessment, pp. 28 - 59

**TO BE COMPLETED BY JANUARY 27: WAIS III ON CLASS PARTNER
(5%) OF GRADE
SCORE RAW ITEMS AND BRING TO CLASS**

January 27

WAIS-III Scoring and Interpretation (AKA, I walked four miles to school through the snow every day uphill both ways ... and so will you)

Suggested reading:

Essentials of Wais-III Assessment, pp. 175 - 181

**HOMEWORK TO BE COMPLETED BY FEBRUARY 3: WAIS III SCORING
EXERCISE
(5%) OF GRADE**

Helpful reference for this exercise: Essentials of WAIS-III Assessment, Chapters 3 and 4

February 3

Mental status exam, assessment interview and report writing

**TO BE COMPLETED SOMETIME B/W FEBRUARY 3 AND FEBRUARY 17:
WAIS-III ON UNDERGRADUATE VOLUNTEER**

February 10

Introduction to MMPI

Suggested reading:

Essentials of MMPI-2 Assessment, Chapters 1, 2, and 5

HW FOR FEBRUARY 17: Ungraded MMPI HW

February 17

MMPI continued

Suggested Reading:

Essentials of MMPI-2 Assessment, Chapter 6

February 24

MMPI continued

Suggested Reading:

Essentials of MMPI-2 Assessment, Chapter 7

DUE MARCH 3: MMPI PRACTICE WRITE-UP (5% of grade)

March 3:

Personality Assessment Inventory

Suggested Reading:

Essentials of PAI Assessment, Chapters 5 and 6

DUE MARCH 10: PAI INTERPRETATION EXERCISE (5% of grade)

**TO BE COMPLETED BETWEEN MARCH 3 AND MARCH 16:
COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT (FINAL PROJECT, WORTH 30% OF
GRADE)**

March 10: EXTRA DAY: TO BE DECIDED ...

More PAI? Basic neuropsych tests? Time to test and work on reports? We will take this in stride and see when we get there what makes most sense.

**DUE MARCH 16: FINAL PROJECT: INTEGRATED REPORT WITH WAIS
AND MMPI/PAI ON UTS REFERRAL**