

# Psychological Assessment

## Course Syllabus ~ Winter 2010

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*Classroom:* Clinic Group Room  
*Lecture:* W, 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**

In many ways, this course is both a class and a mini-practicum. 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. AS WITH ANY CLINICAL SITUATION, YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUR CLIENT DOES NOT END UNTIL YOUR CLINICAL DUTIES HAVE BEEN FULFILLED. DUE TO THE SHORTNESS OF THE TERM AND SCHEDULING DIFFICULTIES, THIS MAY MEAN YOU WILL BE FINALIZING YOUR REPORT OR GIVING FEEDBACK INTO THE BEGINNING OF THE SPRING TERM.

### **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:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. Administer WAIS-IV to class partner  | 5%  |
| 2. WAIS-IV scoring exercise   | 10% |
| 3. Peer check of WAIS-IV scoring for volunteer  | 5%  |
| 4. Administer WAIS-IV to volunteer, score, and write report   | 15% |
| 5. MMPI practice write-up   | 10% |
| 6. PAI practice write-up  | 10% |
| 7. Administer WAIS-IV and MMPI/PAI to clinical referral, score, write up report, and provide feedback | 30% |
| 8. Peer check of WAIS-IV scoring for clinical referral  | 10% |
| 9. Class participation  | 15% |

**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. Once you know the background and history of the test, it may affect how you approach the test and your results would not be valid.

**January 13**

*Introduction to WAIS-IV Administration*

Suggested reading:

Essentials of Wais-IV Assessment, pp. 41-53

**January 20**

*WAIS-IV Administration, continued*

Suggested reading:

Essentials of Wais-IV Assessment, pp. 53-84

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

**January 27**

*WAIS-IV 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-IV Assessment, pp. 219-238

**HOMEWORK TO BE COMPLETED BY FEBRUARY 3: WAIS IV SCORING  
EXERCISE  
(10%) OF GRADE**

Helpful reference for this exercise: Essentials of WAIS-IV 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-IV ON VOLUNTEER  
DUE NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 17: WAIS-IV VOLUNTEER REPORT  
AND PEER CHECK OF SCORING**

**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 (10% of grade)****March 3:**

Personality Assessment Inventory

Suggested Reading:

Essentials of PAI Assessment, Chapters 5 and 6

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

**TO BE COMPLETED BETWEEN MARCH 3 AND MARCH 10:  
COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT (FINAL PROJECT, WORTH 30% OF  
GRADE)**

**March 10: Class Cancelled Due to SRA**

I will be available for individual supervision on March 8 and 9, and again March 15-17

**PEER CHECK OF SCORING DUE BY FRIDAY, MARCH 12 (10% of grade)**

**NOTE: YOU MUST SCHEDULE A TIME FOR INDIVIDUAL SUPERVISION  
WITH ME. IT IS LIKELY YOUR REPORT WILL GO THROUGH AT LEAST  
ONE DRAFT OF REVISIONS**

**DUE MARCH 15: FINAL PROJECT: INTEGRATED REPORT WITH WAIS  
AND MMPI/PAI ON REFERRAL, DRAFT 1**