

## 270-801 Assessment Techniques in Counseling

FALL 2009

Wednesdays, 2:25-5:25

**Instructor:** Mindi Thompson, PhD Assistant Professor

**Office:** 235 Rust-Schreiner

**Email:** mnthompson@ wisc.edu

**Phone:** 608-265-4760

**Class room:** Eng Hall, Room 3359

**Office hours:** Thursdays 10:30-12:30, and by appointment

**TA:** Michael J. Dvorscek, M.S.

**Email:** dvorscek@wisc.edu

**Office:** 339 Rust-Schreiner

### **Course Description:**

This course will survey the general purposes of appraisal and assessment in counseling. Professional issues, ethical standards of practice, and measurement concepts that are critical for effective use, interpretation, and communication of assessment results will be reviewed. The course will attend to these issues across developmental stages with whom counselors may work in a variety of professional settings. It is assumed that students have a solid familiarity with introductory concepts in human development and general psychology prior to this course. Class time will be devoted to lectures, discussion of the readings and small group work. Particular attention will be given to the use of assessment and appraisal within the context of counseling process.

### **Multicultural Focus:**

This course involves discussions regarding the influence of cultural dynamics such as race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation and spirituality, age, ability, class, and nationality within the process of assessment. Development of counselor sensitivity and responsiveness to diversity will be encouraged throughout the course.

### **Course Objective**

- Demonstrate an understanding of basic concepts of evaluation in psychological assessment (including a solid understanding of psychometric properties and statistics in relation to assessment).
- Demonstrate familiarity with traditional assessments including the major objective personality inventories such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI-2), Five Factor model of assessment (NEO-PI-R) and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI); standardized assessments of intelligence such as the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS-III) and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC-III); assessments of vocational and occupational interests such as the Self-Directed Search (SDS) and Strong Interest Inventory (SII); as well as tests evaluating a narrow range of functioning such as Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and the Brief Symptoms Inventory (BSI).
- Develop skill in (a) recognizing and evaluating the need for assessment, (b) selection and administration of assessment and testing instruments, and (c) interpreting findings.
- Demonstrate skill in appropriately conducting intake interviewing, diagnostic assessment, and risk assessment.

- Demonstrate an understanding of, and adherence to, the ethical guidelines as relevant to assessment.

This seminar will support your progress toward meeting the requirements for the masters degree. Through the readings, discussion topics, and assignments you will have the opportunity to further develop your competency in several of the areas established by the UW-Madison Department of Counseling Psychology, including: case conceptualization, presentation, counseling, multicultural, and consultation skills; professional identity; and specialization.

### **Required Texts and Materials**

Whiston, S. C. (2009). *Principles and applications of assessment in counseling* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson-Brooks/Cole.

American Psychiatric Association (2000). DSM-IV-TR

Additional readings available at Learn@UW

Test Materials to be purchased from the Educational and Psychological Training Clinic

### **Classroom Guidelines**

The creation of a positive classroom learning environment for all students is critical. Listed below are a few guidelines (note: this list is not comprehensive) that will promote such an environment for you, your colleagues and your instructor:

- Students will use respectful language and respect the rights and opinions of others when speaking with one another and the instructor.
- Students will avoid disruptive behaviors in class (e.g., tardiness, talking in class on unrelated topic(s), consuming food/drink in a disruptive manner, surfing the internet, updating Facebook, checking email, “packing up” before the end of class).
- Students will accept feedback (including but not limited to) regarding conduct and academic performance in a mature manner consistent with professional standards.
- Students will strive to integrate feedback and will consult with the instructor regarding ways in which feedback may be incorporated.

Consistent violation of these guidelines and inattention to feedback may result in a lower grade in this course and may influence the content of the student’s annual evaluation letters. The instructor will provide students with a first warning by email and a second warning will occur in a formal meeting with the instructor.

### **Requirements**

#### **Course Requirements:**

1. **Attendance and Participation** (15 points): Given the interactive nature of this course, attendance and participation are necessary in order to develop knowledge and skills as counselors. Students are expected to attend class and participate in a manner that advances the objectives of the course.
  - a. Any absence from the class must be arranged in advance with the instructor. More than 2 absences from class will result in the lowering of your grade by 5 points for each missed class period. More than 3 absences will result in a failed grade regardless of academic standing.
  - b. Students are expected to arrive for each class having carefully read the assigned materials, prepared to participate in a variety of class discussions, and completed any homework assignments. Students must complete the assigned readings and assignments *prior to* the class meeting and to arrive *on time* to all class meetings

- (tardiness will result in a lowered class grade). Students will be evaluated based on their class participation in terms of quantity and quality.
- i. Please know that you will read more material than we have time to cover in class meetings. The absence of formal examinations or discussion of particular assigned readings does not mean that you do not need to complete the readings. Rather, the assigned readings and our discussions of them help you perform better on the graded assignments and fulfill your development into a professional counselor.
  - ii. In order to receive maximum credit for class participation, you are expected to volunteer in class in a manner that stimulates further discussion and reflects that you have carefully read the readings.
- c. Students are expected to be mindful and respectful of others during class periods and to contribute to the creations of a classroom learning environment that facilitates the learning of all students.
  - d. Throughout the semester, assignments will be given (e.g., to take an assessment instrument, practice/mock administration of an assessment) to be completed before the next class. Although they are not evaluated using a letter grade, failure to complete these assignments or insufficient completion thereof will result in lowering of the semester's grade.
2. **Assessment Concepts Exam** (15 points). One in-class exam will focus on psychometric principles, culture, and professional/ethical concerns related to testing and assessment. The format includes multiple-choice, sentence completion, and short-essay responses—calculators are not necessary.
  3. **Class Presentations** (15 points). Working in groups of 3-4, each group will present on one of the following five areas of focus: affective functioning (e.g., depression and anxiety disorders), general psychopathology (clinical syndromes), personality styles and personality disorders, cognitive functioning, and occupational interests.
    - a. As a group, you will survey the different strategies and relevant issues involved in assessment in your area.
    - b. Each student in the group will present one specific assessment within your area and will write up a description and evaluation of this instrument (see instrument review requirement below). This write-up will be distributed to the class one week prior to your group presentation.
    - c. Group presentations will last approximately 1 ½ hours and must include experiential components (e.g., demonstration of administration of test, mock interpretation of test scores to a hypothetical professional, etc.).
  4. **Review of a testing or assessment instrument** (10 points). Drawing from the group presentation (see above), each student will write a review on a psychological test or instrument that evaluates for a particular kind of psychological functioning.
    - a. The review will be organized as follows: (a) purpose of instrument, (b) description of items, (c) review psychometric properties, (d) target population, (e) implicit assumptions, (e) strengths of instrument, (f) limitations of instrument, and (g) general conclusions.
    - b. These write-ups will be 5-7 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins.
  5. **Assessment of Fictional Character** (20 points). Each student will write up a report on a fictional character from a clinical perspective. The character is John Nash as portrayed in the film, *A Beautiful Mind*. Students will view the film and write up an assessment report of this character.

- a. This paper should be approximately 6 – 7 pages (double-spaced).
6. **Interview Assessment with Volunteer (25 points).** You will conduct an interview of a volunteer undergraduate student from the CP 650 course. You will conduct an interview of the person as if she/he were a client whom you were seeing for an intake assessment. You should assess for the person's psychological functioning, personality, formative life events, and future goals and motivations.
  - a. These interviews will be videotaped, and the tape, along with the write-up of your assessment will be turned into the instructor.
  - b. The write-up will be 6-7 pages, typed, double-spaced

### **Course Policies:**

- Assignments are due on the dates and times stated in the schedule unless prior approval is received from the instructor. Points will be deducted for late assignments.
- Students are required to obtain and maintain your wisc.edu email account. I will conduct class business and make announcements through this account and Learn@UW.
- Students' performance in this and other CP courses are used to monitor progress toward the academic and professional benchmarks that are detailed in the CP Handbook.
- Writing is essential to one's development as a counselor. Therefore, all writing assignments are expected to be well-written and edited. Students are encouraged to use the writing center for assistance.
- Please let me know as early as is feasible if you need accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments of this course to enable you to fully participate. Last minute special requests will be subject to the same late assignment policy as other students.
- You are expected to respect confidentiality in the classroom. People may reveal information about themselves in class that they would not want others outside of the class to have.
- All students in the Department will demonstrate behavior that is consistent with the Ethical Standards forwarded by the APA and ACA in their code of ethics. Failure to do so may result in termination from the Department.

### **Course Grading:**

Attendance & Participation	15%	93%-100% = A
Concepts Exam	15%	87%-92% = AB
Presentation	15%	83%-87% = B
Review of instrument	10%	77% - 82% = BC
Assessment of Fictional Character	20%	73% - 76% = C
Interview Assessment	25%	Below 72% = Fail

## Tentative Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

Class	Date	Topic	Readings	Tasks/Activities
1	9/2	Course Introduction – review syllabus Overview of Assessment	Syllabus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit preferences for group presentations</li> </ul>
2	9/9	History, purpose, & professionalism in assessment	Chapters 1 and 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In class discussion &amp; review: values, beliefs, &amp; perspectives of assessment</li> </ul>
3	9/16	Therapeutic Assessment; Overview of DSM; Mental Status Exam	Chapters 12 and 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In class: diagnostic assessment practice scenarios</li> </ul>
4	9/23	Ethical & Professional Issues	Chapter 14; Appendices B and C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In class: role plays: ethical dilemmas</li> </ul>
5	9/30	Psychometric properties	Chapters 2, 3, & 4 Chapter 4 in Sattler, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of Dramatized Character write-up <b>DUE</b> at beginning of class</li> </ul>
6	10/7	Culture, bias, and psychometric properties (cont)	Pages 342–356 in chapter 15, Appendix E Ch. 19-20 in Sattler, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In class: group quiz</li> <li>In class: biopsychosocial self-assessment</li> </ul>
7	10/14	Clinical judgment; Case Notes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Exam</b></li> </ul>
8	10/21	Diagnostic Assessment, Intake Interviews, Risk Assessment, Communicating Assessment Results	Chapter 6 DeJong & Miller, 1995 Ch. 3 in Groth-Marnat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Class Role Plays: Intake interviews, risk assessment, &amp; communicating assessment results</li> </ul>
9	10/28	Mental Health Assessment Pt 1: Affect and Mood	Chapter 13 in Groth-Marnat Affective Functioning Assessment Instrument Student Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affective Functioning Group Presentation</li> </ul>
10	11/4	Mental Health Assessment Pt 2: General psychopathology	Psychopathology Assessment Instrument Student Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Psychopathology Group Presentation</li> </ul>
11	11/11	Assessment of Personality	Chapter 10 Personality Assessment Instrument Student Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personality Assessment Group Presentation</li> </ul>

12	11/18	Interest and career inventories	Chapter 9 Occupational Assessment Instrument Student Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occupational Assessment Group Presentation</li> </ul>
13	11/25	Volunteer Assessment Working Day	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work on Interview Assessment with Volunteer</li> </ul>
14	12/2	Intelligence, Cognitive, and Aptitude Assessment	Chapters 7, 8 Cognitive Functioning Assessment Instrument Student Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cognitive Functioning Group Presentation</li> </ul>
15	12/9	Treatment Planning	Groth-Marnat Ch. 14	
16		NO CLASS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview Assessment with Volunteer <b>DUE, in instructor mailbox</b> by 5pm on December 15<sup>th</sup></li> </ul>

Group Presentations and Instruments:

- Cognitive Functioning
  - WAIS, WISC, WRAT, WIAT, WJ
- Affective Functioning
  - BDI, BSI, PHQ
- Personality - psychopathology
  - MMPI, MBTI, NEO
- Personality
  - MCMI, PAI, TAT, Rorschach
- Occupational
  - SDS, SII, Campbell Interests and Skills, Skills Confidence Inventory