SYLLABUS
PSYC 671: Advanced Assessment
Spring Semester 2015
Thursdays, 12:15 – 2:55 p.m.
Rockwell Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will deepen your understanding of the theory and practice of psychological and cognitive assessment. You will learn more about the cultures of assessment, the challenges to assessment, and the concepts of psychometrics and test construction. You will learn the administration, coding, and interpretation of the Rorschach (using the R-PAS method) and the MMPI-2. You will practice administering, coding, scoring, and interpreting instruments and presenting orally and in writing comprehensive, integrated psychological evaluations.

LEARNING GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The goals of this course are for you to:

1. Understand the purposes and uses of psychological assessment, the different cultures of assessment, and the challenges to assessment.
2. Deepen your work in psychological assessment.
3. Review the ethics issues implicated in psychological assessment.
4. Learn in greater depth psychometrics and test construction and the ability to evaluate the reliability and validity of test instruments and of test protocols.
5. Learn the administration, scoring, and interpretation of the Rorschach (R-PAS system);
6. Learn the administration and interpretation of the MMPI-2;
7. Understand the principles of comprehensive integrative assessment;
8. Learn to administer, code, score, interpret, conceptualize, present, and write up an integrative psychological assessment report;
9. Become skilled in presenting, in case conference and written reports, both norm-based and life-world understandings of a person's functioning;
10. Develop with more depth your human science approach to assessment;
11. Reflect on how you integrate your theoretical orientation, your collaborative assessment approach, and your human science orientation into the mainstream.
discourse in psychology and psychological assessment, including DSM-5 categories and labels; and

12. Learn and practice a more traditional approach to assessment report writing and presentation.

COMPETENCIES

By the end of the semester you should have made significant progress towards meeting the following competencies in psychological assessment skills:

1. Ability to select and implement multiple methods and means of evaluation in ways that are responsive to and respectful of diverse individuals;

2. Ability to utilize systematic approaches to gathering data to inform clinical decisionmaking;

3. Knowledge of psychometric issues and bases of assessment methods;

4. Knowledge of issues related to integration of different data sources;

5. Ability to integrate assessment data from different sources for diagnostic purposes; and

6. Ability to formulate and apply diagnoses and understand the strengths and limitations of current diagnostic approaches.

GRADING

Grades will be determined as follows:

1. 50% on class tasks, such as the responses to the initial set of questions, the coding practice, the coding presentation, the Rorschach administration of another student, the assessment, presentation, and write-up on self, and class participation.

2. 25% on your final presentation of a psychological assessment.

3. 25% on your final write-up of your psychological assessment.

Attendance is required. You will be penalized for more than one unexcused absence. You will also be penalized for unexcused late submission of materials.

BLACKBOARD

We will be using Blackboard for readings and other materials.

MAIN TEXT

SCHEDULE

January 8, 2015

Assignments before class:
- Prepare to present responses to initial questions.

Topics in class:
- Review of syllabus.
- Introduction to course and approaches.
- Introductions and student responses to initial questions.
- Discussion of challenges in comprehensive psychological assessment and process of integrating various kinds of findings, often competing.
- Discussion of forensic assessment and other specialty areas.
- Discussion of a case.

January 15, 2015

Assignments before class:
- Review ethics guidelines for assessment.
- Write up responses to initial questions and email instructor.
- Continue to review R-PAS Manual in preparation for actual work with it.

Topics in class:
- Presentation by Jeremy Axelrod of a psychological assessment.
- Discussion of readings, including choices of instruments and different cultures of Rorschach assessors and MMPI, reflecting larger splits in the field of psychology.
- Ethics in assessment.
January 22, 2015

Assignments before class:
- Read closely Chapters 1-3 of R-PAS Manual.
- Coding practice in R-PAS Manual (numbers 1-25).

Topics in class:
- Assignments of first two presentations on coding issues.
- Introduction to the Rorschach (initial):
  o History of Rorschach.
  o History of R-PAS.
  o Review of the R-PAS manual’s structure.
- R-PAS administration and coding.

January 29, 2015

Assignments before class:
- Read Chapter 4 of R-PAS manual.
- Coding practice in R-PAS Manual (numbers 26-50).
- Prepare presentation on coding issue.
- Prepare to administer Rorschach to first year student.

Topics in class:
- Assignments of remaining presentations on coding issues.
- Preparation for administering Rorschach to first year student.
- R-PAS administration and coding, cont’d.
- Two presentations on coding practice.
- Review of coding practice.

February 5, 2015

Assignments before class:
- Coding practice in R-PAS Manual (numbers 51-75).
- Administer the Rorschach to a first year student; code it; submit coded protocol to instructor, in class or by Friday (responses, clarification, and coding).
- Prepare presentation on coding issue.
Topics in class:
- Student feedback on administering Rorschach to another person and coding the protocol.
- R-PAS coding, cont’d.
- Review of coding practice.
- Presentations on coding issues.

February 12, 2015

Assignments before class:
- Read Chapter 5 of R-PAS Manual.
- Coding practice (numbers 76-100).
- Prepare presentation on coding issue.

Topics in class:
- R-PAS coding, cont’d.
- Review of coding practice.
- Finish presentations on coding issues.
- Introduction to R-PAS interpretation.

February 19, 2015

Assignments before class:
- Read Chapters 8, 10, and 11 (case) of R-PAS manual.

Topics in class:
- Discussion of case from Chapter 11.
- Discussion of R-PAS interpretation.
- Example of content (qualitative) analysis.

February 26, 2015

Assignments before class:
- Read Chapters 12-16 of R-PAS manual (enough to understand generally)
- Start project for March 12.

Topics in class:
- Guest instructor: Dr. Terri Dillmore, on psychometrics and test construction.
- After: finish discussing case (if not already completed).
- Conclusion to Rorschach (for now).
March 5, 2015—Spring Break

March 12, 2015

Assignments before class:
- Prepare an integrated psychological assessment conceptualization of yourself:
  - Administer the Rorschach to classmate; code it carefully; and give coded protocol to that classmate.
  - Obtain R-PAS report of your own Rorschach.
  - Administer MMPI-2 to yourself and score it.
  - Administer WASI or 4 subtests of WAIS-IV to a classmate; score it but do not input scores; give scored protocol to that classmate.
  - Code or score your own cognitive instrument, R-PAS, and MMPI-2 protocols. Obtain computerized scores for each, if possible.
  - Start planning to find client for final assessment.

Topics in class:
- Initial student feedback on self-assessment.
- The process of conceptualizing a person's functioning; how to prepare a presentation of a comprehensive, integrated assessment; and how to write up an integrated report.
- MMPI-2: background; psychometric qualities of the MMPI-2.
- MMPI-2 validity scales.
- MMPI-2 clinical scales.

March 19, 2015

Assignments before class:
- Review the results of your own protocols and develop an integrated conceptualization of your personality and cognitive functioning.
- Prepare to present in class aspects of your conceptualization of the psychological assessment of you. What did you learn about yourself, about psychological assessment, and about being assessed?
- Write up a 1-2 page integrated case conceptualization of yourself, due on March 26.
- Find client for final assessment.

Topics in class:
- Preparation for final presentation and final report.
- Present aspects of your conceptualization of yourself and what you learned about the process of developing a conceptualization.
- MMPI-2: clinical scales, code types, content interpretations.

March 26, April 9, 16, and first half of April 23, 2015 (April 2, 2015 is Spring Break)

Assignments for class:
- Perform a comprehensive assessment of a Clinic client, using a clinical interview, the Rorschach, the MMPI-2 and the WAIS-IV. Use other instruments, if possible, such as the Bender-Gestalt, TAT, and PAI.
- Prepare a presentation of your proposed, integrated findings.
- Prepare a final written integrated report. Submit a draft within one week of your presentation. The final report is due Monday, May 6, 2015, by 5:00 p.m.

Topics for class:
- Presentations of cases and discussion.

Second half of April 23, 2015

Topics:
- Thinking about integrative assessment; discussion of process, strengths and weaknesses.
- How to integrate theoretical orientation into report in “traditional” or mainstream site; how to incorporate collaborative assessment practices and attitudes.
- Evaluating course and recommendations for future courses.
RESOURCES [some are in the Clinic library]


American Psychoanalytic Association (and other entities). *The psychodynamic diagnostic manual (PDM).* Silver Spring, MD: Alliance of Psychoanalytic Organizations.


Levak, R. W., Siegel, L. and Nichols, D. S. Therapeutic feedback with the MMPI-2: A positive psychology approach. New York: Routledge.


APA Ethical Standards, as well as specialized standards:

Guidelines for Psychological Practice in Health Care Delivery Systems.
Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology.
Guidelines for Psychological Evaluations in Child Protection Matters.


See edited volumes on projective techniques such as those by Anderson & Anderson; Apt & Belleck; Hersen, Kazdin, & Bellack; Murchison; and Rabin.

See Rorschach books on reserve in the Psychology Clinic Office.

The R-PAS program is online (see Linda).

The RorScan and RIAP interpretive programs (with summary sheets, etc.) are loaded on computers in Room 902, along with the MMPI-2 and PAI.