Course Description: This course features an overview of individual and group approaches to assessment used by professional counselors. Course participants evaluate instruments, interpret results, and demonstrate knowledge of psychometric properties.

Course Objectives: The purpose of this course is to provide students with the knowledge and skills to perform and evaluate psychological assessment (defined broadly) based upon theoretical, empirical, and practical considerations in a multicultural society. The objectives of the course include the below knowledge and skill outcomes.

Knowledge and Skill Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Understand historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment (CACREP II.G.7.a).
   – exams
2. Know basic concepts of standardized and nonstandardized testing and other assessment techniques, including norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessment, environmental assessment, performance assessment, individual and group test and inventory methods, psychological testing, and behavioral observations (CACREP II.G.7.b). – exams, presentation, class discussion, & classroom activities
3. Understand statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations (CACREP II.G.7.c). – exams, presentation, class discussion, & classroom activities
4. Understand reliability (i.e., theory of measurement error, models of reliability, and the use of reliability information) (CACREP II.G.7.d). – exams, presentation, class discussion, & classroom activities
5. Understand validity (i.e., evidence of validity, types of validity, and the relationship between reliability and validity) (CACREP II.G.7.e). – exams, presentation, class discussion, & classroom activities
6. Understand social and cultural factors related to the assessment and evaluation of individuals, groups, and specific populations (CACREP II.G.7.f). – exams, presentation, role plays, & class discussion
7. Understand ethical strategies for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in counseling (CACREP II.G.7.g). – exams, presentation, leading class discussion, & paper
8. Understand the importance of research in advancing the counseling profession (CACREP II.G.8.a). – exams, presentation, & leading class discussion
9. Understand statistical methods used in conducting research and program evaluation (CACREP II.G.8.c). – exams, presentation, leading class discussion, & paper

*The methods used to evaluate each Knowledge and Skill Outcome are listed after each standard
**Course Content:** This course is designed to meet the CACREP 2009 Standards for Assessment (Section II.G.7). Course content includes the history of assessment procedures, types of assessment, technological applications of assessment, culturally appropriate/sensitive assessment, basic statistical procedures, appropriate assessment selection, types of psychological tests (i.e. intellectual, academic, achievement, personality, behavior rating scales, adaptive behavior scales), diagnostic interview techniques, and responsible and ethical use of assessments.

**Methods:** Methods of instruction include, but are not limited to the following: readings, lectures, classroom discussions, exams, paper/report, presentations, role plays, and classroom activities.

**Required Texts:**


*Additional readings will be assigned by the instructor

**Recommended Readings:** see reference list at the end of the syllabus

**Professional Conduct/Ethics:** All students are required to know and adhere to their respective professional association (e.g., ACA, APA) code of ethics. Ethical violations may result in failure of the course and possibly dismissal from the program.

**Academic Conduct/Integrity:** Cheating on examinations, submitting work of other students as your own, or plagiarism in any form will result in penalties ranging from an “F” on an assignment to expulsion from the University.


**Accommodations Statement:** Students who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services, voice/TTY (970) 351-2289, or fax (970) 351-4166, or visit [www.unco.edu/dss](http://www.unco.edu/dss) as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**Inclusivity/Diversity Statement:** The College of Education and Behavioral Sciences (CEBS) supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength. We expect that students, faculty, administrators and staff within CEBS will respect differences and demonstrate diligence in understanding how other peoples’ perspectives, behaviors, and worldviews may be different from their own.
Course Requirements and Evaluation:
(Used to achieve course objectives listed above)

Class Group Presentation (50 points): You are required to select an assessment tool that is commonly used in the field and present it to the class (counseling and psychological journals are excellent sources to find assessment tools). Your presentation should be approximately 45 minutes in length and should briefly include the following: purpose of the test or how it can be used as a counseling tool; standardization, administration/setting; theoretical background; scales/description; scoring procedures; psychometric properties (reliability & validity); and other relevant additional information (e.g. where the instrument can be obtained, test user qualifications). Please note that a majority of your presentation should demonstrate the application of the assessment. Therefore, you will provide each class member with the assessment and they will take the assessment; you will explain to the class how to score and interpret their results. At the end of the presentation, you should conduct a brief role-play that explains how and why you would use the assessment with a client. Please see the outline for “Evaluating Psychological Tests” listed at the end of the syllabus; your presentation and handout should closely follow this outline. All topics/tests must receive prior approval by the instructor. You will also be expected to provide the entire class with an outline/handout and a reference list in APA format. Your grade will be determined by ratings from your classmates and the instructor (see Expectations for Group Presentation grading sheet at the end of the syllabus). All group members are expected to present equally during the presentation. You will work with one other individual from this class. Please adhere to all copyrights.

Exams (100 points): There will be two exams that will cover the information from class readings, lectures, and class discussion.

Assessment Report (50): You will be required to conduct a clinical/diagnostic interview with a pseudo/volunteer client and then write an assessment report. Your report should include a thorough psychosocial history, mini-mental status exam & MSE information, suicide/homicide assessment, diagnostic impressions, treatment/counseling recommendations/plan, and any appropriate assessment data. You should use all of the data to formulate your diagnostic impressions based on your hypotheses. Although this is not included in a typical report, you should discuss disconfirmatory, confirmatory, and alternative hypotheses (see Spengler et al., 1995). Your treatment recommendations should help address the presenting problem of the client and should be based on all of the information gathered during the interview, as well as any assessment data. Make sure you provide a thorough rationale for each treatment recommendation/goal and a minimum of 5 recommendations/goals are expected. As part of your recommendations, make sure you provide concrete treatment objectives for each recommendation/goal. Please note: Your report is based on fictitious information and should not include any identifying client information. Writing standards: Your paper should be no more than 6 pages double spaced and written in APA style (5th ed.). As a graduate student, it is expected that you have strong writing skills. Therefore, your report should be professionally written and be free from any grammatical and spelling errors. The finished product of this report is expected to be at the quality closely representative of a professional report.

Leading Class Discussions (25 points): Each student will review an article that addresses a contemporary issue on the topic related to psychological assessment in the counseling field and lead a small group class discussion. Your article must have been published in 2010 or later. You
will be responsible for providing an outline (1 page) of the article to the class, 3 – 4 class discussion questions, and then facilitate the discussion in class. Your outline should include at minimum: an overview, strengths, limitations, research implications, and counseling implications. The number of small groups will be determined based on class size. The article must be from one of the following journals: *Journal of Personality Assessment; Psychological Assessment; Professional Psychology: Research and Practice; Assessment; Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development; Journal of Counseling and Development; Journal of Counseling Psychology; Journal of Vocational Behavior; The Counseling Psychologist* (all journals are accessible on-line through UNC’s library).

**Reflection Paper (25 points):**
Students are required to complete a reflection paper where each student will reflect/consider the following: 1) what is the role of assessments in the lives of counselors; 2) what considerations are there for using various assessments in counseling (i.e., statistically, culturally, and in regards to treatment planning)?

**Attendance and Active Participation (25 points):** Attendance and participation related to academic content are expected at all class meetings. You should NOT assume that you will receive all attendance and participation points for only attending class; you must earn the points, just as you do with any other assignment. **Participation:** You should have a “capacity to relate effectively and meaningfully with individuals, groups, and/or communities.” It is expected that you participate in a professional manner and your interpersonal interactions are respectful to others, as well as maintaining a professional attitude. Self-awareness (e.g. self-assessment, self-care, openness to feedback) will also be needed to actively participate in class. Class participation is defined as provoking thought and furthering discussions. Points will be lost for nonparticipation such as showing off one’s knowledge, seeking attention, or diverting discussion onto irrelevant tangents or into one’s own agenda. **Attendance:** Attendance is vital and each student is accountable for class participation requirements, lecture, content, and other classroom work. Missing class, being late, or a lack of participation will result in a lower final grade. If emergencies occur, please notify me before class. **Driving distance** (e.g. commuting) is not an excuse to miss class or not fulfill any course responsibilities. **Extended breaks:** Breaks will be provided throughout the class. Excessively leaving the class to take additional breaks for extended time periods will decrease your final grade. **Late Arrival:** Class will start on time and will continue for the entire scheduled time. Arriving late to class or leaving early will lower your final grade. Please note if you miss more than 4 hours of total class time by being late or taking excessive breaks, you will likely fail and probably should drop the course.

**Please note:** In accordance with the student handbook, the “Professional Counseling program faculty members systematically review the progress of each student each semester.” You should expect that your performance and professional conduct related to this class to be incorporated into the review process.

**Readings and Assignments:** Students are expected to have completed the assigned readings prior to coming to class and actively participate in discussions. All assignments are due at the beginning of class as scheduled in the course outline. Not reading the material and/or late assignments will significantly lower your grade (i.e 10 points per day is deducted for turning in work late).
Possible point values in each area are as follows:  
**TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 275**

- **Class Group Presentation**: 50 points
- **Exams**: 100 points
- **Psychosocial/Assessment Report**: 50 points
- **Leading Class Discussions**: 25 points
- **Reflection Paper**: 25 points
- **Attendance and Participation**: 25 points

**Grading Scale:**

- **A**: 93% to 100%
- **A-**: 90% to 92%
- **B+**: 87% to 89%
- **B**: 83% to 86%
- **B-**: 80% to 82%
- **C+**: 77% to 79%
- **C**: 73% to 76%
- **C-**: 70% to 72%
- **D+**: 67% to 69%
- **D**: 63% to 66%
- **D-**: 60% to 62%
- **F**: Below 60%

**Course Outline**

*Readings should be completed by the day they are listed*

**Friday – Day 1 (4-10pm)**

- Introductions
- Review the Syllabus
- Whiston (2013) Ch 1 – Assessment in counseling
- Whiston (2013) Ch 2 – Basic assessment principles
- Whiston (2013) Ch 4 – Validity and item analysis
- Whiston (2013) Ch 5 – Selection, administration, scoring, and communicating assessment results

**Saturday – Day 2 (8-5pm)**

- Diagnostic Interviewing (Zimmerman, 1994); Sommers-Flanagan & Sommers-Flanagan, (2009)
- Mental Status Examination (Zimmerman, 1994); Sommers-Flanagan & Sommers-Flanagan, (2009)
- Whiston (2013) Ch 7 – Intelligence and general ability testing
- Whiston (2013) Ch 8 – Measuring achievement and aptitude: Applications for counseling
- Whiston (2013) Ch 9 – Assessment in career counseling
- Report Writing
- Treatment Planning
Sunday – Day 3 (8-4pm)
- Whiston (2013) Ch 10 - Appraisal of personality
- Whiston (2013) Ch 11 – Assessment in marriage and family counseling
- Axis I & II Assessment
- Child Assessment

Exam 1

Friday – Day 4 (4-10pm)
- Outcome Questionnaire – 45.2
- Whiston (2013) Ch 14 – Ethical and Legal Issues in Assessment
- Multicultural Assessment Whiston (2013) Ch 15 – Issues related to assessment with diverse populations
  - Supplemental reading that is NOT required:
- Conducting a Suicide Assessment
- Leading Class Discussions

Saturday – Day 5 (8-5pm)
- Clinical versus Statistical Prediction
  - Supplemental reading that is NOT required:
- Heuristics and Biases
- De-biasing strategies
- Clinical Judgment
- Group 1 Presentation
- Group 2 Presentation
- Group 3 Presentation

Sunday – Day 6 (8-4pm)
- Group 4 Presentation
- Group 5 Presentation
• Group 6 Presentation
• Psychological Masquerade
  o Supplemental readings that are NOT required:
    ▪ Taylor (2007), Ch 1 & 3

Exam 2 – Final
Psychosocial/Assessment Report Due
Reflection Paper Due

THIS COURSE SCHEDULE SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

ADDITIONAL READINGS MAY BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS
Expectations for Group Presentation

(2) – Thorough review of the assessment tool – purpose of the test or how it can be used as a counseling tool; theoretical background if applicable

(3) – Standardization, administration/setting, scoring procedures

(2) – Scales/description

(3) – Psychometric properties (reliability & validity)

(20) – Explained and applied assessment tool in an effective manner with the class

(20) – Individual Presentation and Group Collaboration (professional presentation)

(50) TOTAL SCORE FOR GROUP PRESENTATION

Group Member Evaluation Form

Please rate your group members participation in your group presentation:

Group Member
No Contribution
Appropriate Contribution
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Group Member
No Contribution
Appropriate Contribution
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Group Member
No Contribution
Appropriate Contribution
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please rate your own level of contribution:

Your Name
No Contribution
Appropriate Contribution
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Evaluation of Psychological Tests

***NOTE: This is a sample outline only, more/less information may be needed depending on the test

Author and Date Published: _______________ Length: __________ Publisher: _____________________________ Qualifications: Level ___

I. Purpose – What was it designed to measure and how can it be used? Describe the practical application of the instrument.
   a. Treatment planning--
   b. Intervention –
   c. Outcome measure--

II. Standardization
   a. Norm Group –
   b. Population/Age – What is the age range?
   c. Multicultural Norms--
   d. Additional Norms Established

III. Administration/Setting
   a. What type of setting is it used in?
   b. How long does it take to administer?
   c. Is it a self-administered questionnaire?
   d. Can it be adapted for use in interview studies?
   e. Is it administered individually and/or in a group?
   f. Can it be computer administered?
   g. Can it be completed on-line via the internet?
   h. Qualification Level:

IV. Theoretical Background – what are the theoretical constructs being measure?

V. Scales/Description –
   a. How many items are there?
   b. How many factors/subscales are there?
   c. What do the subscales measure?

VI. Scoring
   a. How is it scored (hand scored or computer scored)?
   b. Range of Scores - What do the scores mean?

VII. Reliability – list all types of reliability tested (e.g. test-retest, Cronbach’s Alpha…). If applicable, include reliability estimates for each subscale and total scale

VIII. Validity – list types of validity that were tested (e.g. Content, Criterion, Construct…)

IX. Strengths

X. Weaknesses

XI. Additional Information
   a. Alternate forms – Are there other versions or forms available (e.g. short-forms)?
   b. Cost – What is included in the cost (e.g. manual, scoring forms/software)?
   c. Publisher – how to obtain the instrument
   d. Journal – list the reference if published in a journal
Recommended Readings

References


