George Mason University  
Graduate School of Education  
EDCD 604.001: Assessment and Appraisal in Counseling  
Mondays, 4:30-7:10 –Enterprise Hall 175  
Spring 2004

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Office Hours: Mondays, 3:30-4:30; Wednesdays, 2:30-4:30 or by appointment

Course Description  
Prerequisite: EDCD 590 or 601. This course prepares students to become informed about psychological and educational tests and assessment procedures that are used and applied in a counseling context. The course will cover basic psychometric properties of tests, methods of gathering and interpreting data, the development and use of assessment tools, resources for learning about tests, and how to choose, administer, and interpret individual and group tests within a culturally diverse framework.

Relationship to C & D Program Goals and Professional Organizations  
This course is a prerequisite for the career counseling class in the C & D Master’s Program. In addition, this course adheres to the CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) standards regarding assessment as follows:  
CACREP-Section II.K.g: An understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation.

Student Outcomes:  
At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of:  
- historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment;  
- 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, behavioral observations, and computer-managed and computer-assisted methods;  
- statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations;  
- reliability (i.e., theory of measurement error, models of reliability, and the use of reliability information);  
- validity (i.e., evidence of validity, types of validity, and the relationship between reliability and validity);  
- age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, disability, culture, spirituality, and other factors related to the assessment and evaluation of individuals, groups, and specific populations;  
- strategies for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in counseling;  
- an understanding of general principles and methods of case conceptualization, assessment, and/or diagnoses of mental and emotional status; and
ethical and legal considerations.

Course material
- Test Packet, which includes selected inventories, booklets, and score sheets-Packaged and available in the bookstore (Strong Campbell, MBTI Type I, and CPI).
- Selected journal readings assigned throughout the semester.

Course Requirements
Students are expected to:
- Actively participate in class and on-line Blackboard discussions (completing reading assignments ahead of time). Two or more unexcused absences will result in course failure.
- Communicate concerns or problems to Instructor via email or phone (see contact information on first page of the syllabus).
- Prepare two observation reports (see attached format).
- Evaluate one test and prepare a class presentation with two partners.
- Complete one individual analysis: includes an intake interview, test administration, analysis of data, and interpretation with a written report (see attached format).
- Complete test on technical aspects of assessment (e.g., standard scores, psychometrics).
- Complete final examination.

*Grading Criteria

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Active Class Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 (10 each)</td>
<td>Assignment #1: Observation Reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Test on psychometrics</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Assignment #2: Test Evaluation and Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Assignment #3: Test Administration and Interpretation</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Final Examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>TOTAL Possible points</td>
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Grades: Grading rubrics will be listed on Blackboard.
100-97=A, 96-93=A-, 92-90 = B+, 89-83= B, 82-80=B-, 79-73= C

NOTE: All written assignments must be typed and must follow APA format.
Grading on written work will take into account the following factors: quality of written work including writing mechanics (e.g., grammar), knowledge of content area, and adherence to requirements of assignment. As a graduate student, it is expected that all of your work will be turned in on the assigned dates. There will be a deduction of a minimum of 1 point for a late assignment or for an assignment not adhering to APA format. Late assignments and class attendance excused for documented medical reasons only.

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS
As posted on C&D homepage:
Professional Performance Criteria
(effective February 25, 2003)

The American Counseling Association code of ethics requires counselor and counselor trainees to maintain standards of professional competence and possess good moral character. Therefore, the Counseling and Development Program has developed Professional Performance Criteria to clarify its expectations for M.Ed. and Ph.D. counseling students. These criteria, as well as procedures for identifying and remediating students who may need assistance fulfilling them, are listed below. See the Counseling and Development website for additional information.

Student Professional Performance Criteria

Communication Skills
- Clear presentation and demonstration of multicultural competencies in counseling skills
- Clear oral communication
- Clear written communication
- Clear ability to demonstrate effective and supportive helping skills
- Clear ability to demonstrate effective listening skills

Professionalism
- Commitment to multiculturalism and diversity
- Commitment to social justice as it relates to counseling
- Respect of multiculturalism and diverse cultures
- Demonstration of openness, willingness to learn, and positive attitude about multiculturalism and diverse cultures
- Commitment to the psychological well-being, health, and wellness for all people
- Sound judgment
- Integrity and honesty
- Ability to accept personal responsibility
- Ability to receive and reflect upon constructive criticism
- Positive attitude
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Ability to maintain confidentiality with clients, students, and colleagues
- Appropriate assertiveness
- Ability to manage stress
- Ability to meet requirements as stated in course syllabi
- Adherence to ACA ethical guidelines

Collaboration
- Respect for the opinion and dignity of others
- Ability to collaborate with others
- Ability to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills
- Ability to participate as a colleague and team member in all aspects of professional training

HONOR CODE
To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set forth the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, plagiarizing, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of their peers. In the even that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. For further information, please refer to the university catalog or website at www.gmu.edu.

NOTE: The university is committed to complying with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by providing reasonable accommodations for applicants for admission, students, applicants for employment, employees, and visitors who are disabled. Applicants for admission and students requiring specific accommodations for a disability should contact the Disability Resource Center at 993-2474, or the University Equity Office at 993-8730.
Course Schedule and Assignments
(reading assignments are to be completed on date listed)

January 26  Introduction to assessment, historical and current issues.
Legal and ethical issues in testing
Read: Walsh and Betz: Chapters 1, 14 (pps 398-407)

February 2  Interviewing and observational techniques
How to select tests
Handout

February 9  Statistical Concepts used in Assessment
Normal Distributions and their relationship to test scores
Read: Walsh and Betz: Chapter 2

February 16  Reliability, Validity and Test Construction
Read: Walsh and Betz: Chapter 3
Due: Observation Report (assignment #1)

February 23  Administration, scoring and interpretation of results
Review for test
Handout

March 1  Test on Psychometrics (1 hour)
Practice intake interview with partners

March 8  Spring break: No class
Read: Chapters 6, 7

March 15  Theories of Cognitive/Intellectual Functioning
Learning Styles and Multiple Intelligences
Assessment of Aptitude and Achievement
Read: Walsh and Betz: Chapters 8, 13
Read: Electronic reserves article:
1) Helms, J.E. (1992). Why is there no study of cultural
equivalence in standardized cognitive ability? American
Psychologist, 47, 1083-1101.

March 22  Cognitive Assessment System (Guest Speaker)
Due: Hand in tests for scoring
Read:
Disparity. American Psychologist, Volume 57 (4), April 2002,
p. 303-305.
2) Amrein et al. (2002, March 28). High stakes Testing,
Uncertainty, and Student Learning. Education Policy Analysis
Archives, 10 (18).

March 29  Assessment of interests and career development
Read: Walsh and Betz: Chapters 9,10
Due: Test Evaluation Presentations (2)

April 5
Personality Testing
Read: Walsh and Betz: Chapters 4, 5
Due: Test Evaluation Presentations (2)

April 12
Assessment and the DSM IV
Interpreting Test Administration Project Test Results
Due: Test Evaluation Presentations (2)
Read: Walsh and Betz: Chapter 14 (pps 407-430)

April 19
Interpreting Test Administration Project Test Results (Cont’d.)
Communicating Results to Student/Client Populations
Writing Test Reports
Handouts
Due: Test Evaluation Presentations (2)

April 26
No class (International Association of Counseling Conference)

May 3
Last class/Wrap Up
Due: Test Administration Project
Distribute Take home final exam

May 10
Due: Take home Final Exam. All finals will be submitted by 4:30 pm to Robinson A, Room 341 (my office) or my faculty mailbox.

Assignment 1-Observation: See APPENDIX A
This assignment is designed to provide practice in conducting observations and writing observation reports. Students should select an individual to observe who is appropriate for their program specialization (i.e., students in the school counseling program should select a child or adolescent in a school setting to observe; agency track students should select an adult who fits your interest area). Use the following guidelines in conducting the observation and preparing the report:

1. Select an individual and observe him/her in a setting in which he/she has an opportunity to interact with others. This could be a classroom, work environment, a cafeteria, student lounge, or similar environment. Avoid settings and situations such as test taking or television watching in which only a limited variety of behaviors are usually exhibited. To avoid making assumptions on the basis of prior information about the person, choose an individual with whom you have had little or no personal contact.

2. Observe the individual twice in different settings (if possible) or you can observe two different individuals. Observe each individual for a period of about 20 minutes. Make every effort to be unobtrusive in order that you do not inadvertently cause the individual to modify his/her behavior. Take notes to record relevant behaviors, details of the environment, and other information as indicated in class and in the outline below. Do not use recording equipment.
3. Prepare two separate reports on the individual you observed (one from each setting). Each report should be 2-3 pages in length, typed. Note: Students observing in a school setting should obtain permission from the teachers and/or principal before conducting the observation. Evaluation of your papers will be based upon objectivity displayed in the observations.

A. The Person Observed: Report the following information in paragraph form
   1. Personal description
   2. Age (can be estimated)
   3. Grade in school, if applicable
   4. Observation environment
   5. Observation day and time

B. The Observation: Describe and discuss the following in paragraph form
   1. Details of the environment and information about others present.
   2. Nature of activity or interaction observed.
   3. Relevant aspects of individual’s behavior, such as task orientation, activity level, attention, verbal and physical responses, and interactions with others.

C. Summary of Data Collection: Develop a summary of the experience in paragraph form. Summarize behavior observed. Do not make interpretations based on the behavior you have observed. Describe what you have seen and recalled and/or recorded, paying particular attention to antecedent and consequent events. Discuss any problems in the observation. Avoid making judgments.

Assignment 2 – Test Evaluation: See APPENDIX B

This assignment is designed to provide practice in critically evaluating an assessment instrument and to introduce you to a wide variety of instruments. Follow the steps listed below in completing this assignment:

1. Working with a partner from class, choose a test or inventory based on your interests. You cannot choose a test that will be reviewed in-depth in class.

2. Read at least two reviews or analyses of the test or inventory in the Mental Measurement Yearbook, Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, Journal of Counseling and Development, or other approved journals.

3. Write a 1-2 page individual critique describing your reactions to the test you have chosen. What are its strengths and weaknesses? Base your evaluation/critique of the test on your personal reactions. For example, would you have one of your clients take this test and why? Is it culturally fair? Is the test valid and reliable?

4. Prepare an oral presentation of the inventory for the class. This presentation should include information included below. All partners must take part in the presentation. Your written individual critique will be due on the date of your presentation.
Outline for Test Evaluation

A. General Information
   1. Title of test, including edition and forms, if appropriate
   2. Author(s)
   3. Publisher and date(s) of publication
   4. Time required for administration
   5. Cost [booklets, answer sheets, materials, scoring services available].

B. Description of Purpose and Nature of Test
   1. General type of tests [individual or group, performance, interest inventory, etc.]
   2. Population for who test is designed [type of individual, age, and ranges].
   3. Type of content [verbal, spatial, numerical, etc.].
   4. Subtest and scores obtained.
   5. Type of items.

C. Practical Evaluation
   1. Practical features of test material, such as design of booklets.
   2. Attractiveness, appropriateness for audience.
   3. Ease of administration.
   4. Clarity of directions.
   5. Scoring procedures.
   6. Qualifications for examiners.

D. Technical Evaluation
   1. Norms
      a) Type of norms (percentiles, standard scores)
      b) Standardization sample: size, nature, and representatives.

   2. Reliability
      a) Types of reliability and procedures (e.g., retest, parallel-form, split half, Kuder Richardson, or coefficient alpha)

   3. Validity
      a) Types of validation procedures (content, criterion-related predictive or concurrent, construct).
      b) Procedures used to assess validity and results of validity assessments.

E. Reviewer Comments
   1. Evaluations from Mental Measurement Yearbook and/or other Sources.

F. Summary Evaluation
   1. Major strengths and weaknesses of the test.
2. Recommendations for use.

You will be graded on your written individual critique and group presentation.

Assignment 3: Test Administration and Interpretation

This assignment will provide practice in administering and interpreting personality and career inventories. It includes peer supervision and self-appraisal components to help you refine your counseling and test interpretation skills.

1. Choose a testing partner from the class and take turns administering the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), the Strong Interest Inventory, and the California Psychological Inventory (CPI) to each other. Conduct an interview session, gathering information about him/her and present the inventory in session to your partner. Make a 20-minute tape recording the initial session. Take time with your interview and it will help tremendously with your paper.

2. Following review of the scored inventories, conduct a second session in which to interpret the results to your partner. Again, make a 20-minute tape recording of the interpretive session. At the conclusion of the testing sessions, partners should allow tape to continue recording and permit partner to provide feedback regarding strengths and weaknesses in terms of interviewing, test presentation, and test interpretation. Tapes will be submitted to the instructor. Provide a copy of the analysis to your partner whom you administered the inventory.

3. Prepare a typed paper in which you do the following:

   a. Provide descriptive data for client, using third person throughout.
   b. Provide an overview of relevant background information
   c. Describe client's attitude toward testing and test taking behavior.
   d. Identify the evaluation components used for this assignment.
   e. Analyze the client's scores for each of the inventories.
   f. Synthesize test data, focusing on similarities and differences noted in the results of the inventories and the interview process.
   g. Summarize major client themes.
   h. In a separate section (on a new page) critique your performance in relation to the interview, test presentation, and test interpretation process. Use first person for this section.
APPENDIX A
OBSERVATION REPORT

The following sections are assigned point value:

Section A: The person observed. Full points given if all information is included (e.g., race/ethnicity, age, clothing, appearance, etc.).

Section B: The observation. Details of the environment should give the reader a sense of being present. Colors, sounds, smells, and so forth are used for a rich portrayal of the environment. Additionally, a clear description of the person’s activity is expected. Points will be deducted for use of subjectivity (e.g., she seemed happy) and for written mechanics.

Section C: Summary of data collection. Reporter should make no interpretation, but describe only what is seen. Behaviors and affect identified should include examples. Absolutely no judgment is made. Points will be deducted for use of subjectivity and for written mechanics.

Students receiving total points for the observation project have adhered to the guidelines of the paper as well as have reported their findings with clarity, and a rich expression of ideas (i.e., grammatically correct language, and clear sentence structure).

APPENDIX B
MENTAL MEASUREMENT YEARBOOK (FYI)

1. On first floor, use stacks in the rear on the right.
2. Use computers in stacks room.
3. Click Menu (Mental Measurement Yearbook)
4. Click on the test you desire to search.
5. Print results.

Other online resources:
- The Buros Institute of Mental Measurement
  http://www.unl.edu/buros
- The Eric Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation
  http://ericae.net