

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
School Psychology Program
SPSY 751-001 Advanced Assessment Practicum I – 3 Credits
Fall 2019
Center for Psychological Services 203N, Tuesday 4:00-6:40

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Prerequisites

SPSY 709, SPSY 710, SPSY 722, SPSY 750; or with permission of instructor

Catalog Description

Provides practical, applied, supervised experience conducting comprehensive psychoeducational evaluations with children and adolescents to develop assessment and diagnostic skills. Requires interviewing, test selection and administration, scoring, report writing, and feedback sessions with clients. Focuses on integration of data and recommendation development. Requires practicum in training clinic, and individual and group supervision. Notes: Open only to School Psychology MA students.

Course overview

In this course, students are required to complete two comprehensive psychoeducational assessments in the psychology training clinic, under the supervision of a licensed psychologist. This provides initial practical experience and application of assessment, writing, and diagnostic skills. For seminar, students meet regularly for group supervision and case presentations. In addition, the supervisor and student will schedule individual meetings to review and discuss case conceptualization, test choices, administration and scoring issues, and feedback on individual written reports. The practicum requires a minimum of 50 hours outside of class time over the course of the semester. Practicum hours vary per week and are not on a set schedule. Practicum hours include activities such as preparation for testing (e.g. reviewing tests), direct client contact hours, scoring, report writing, and individual supervision.

Composition of the methods and tests used in the comprehensive evaluations will vary as a function of the referral question. The components of an evaluation will typically include a measure of intelligence (e.g. *Wechsler, Stanford Binet, DAS, WJ Cog*), measures of information processing (e.g. *Bender, Beery VMI, TAPS3, WJ Cog, CPT*, etc.); achievement (e.g. *WJ Ach, WIAT, KTEA, GORT, Nelson Denny Reading*, etc.); behavior rating scales (e.g. *BASC, ASEBA, Conners, BRIEF*); social-emotional screening instrument (e.g., *DAP:SPED*); emotional-personality assessments (e.g. *Robert's, TAT, PAI-A, Rorschach*, etc.); interviews of the client and parent(s); and other methods as directed by the supervisors. Student and instructor will consult on selection of instruments for individual cases.

Course Delivery

This course will be delivered in a seminar and practicum format. Seminar meets weekly until mid-way through the semester (approximately 7 classes), then students schedule meetings for individual supervision

with their supervisors. The practicum requires a minimum of 50 hours outside of class time over the course of the semester. Practicum hours vary per week and are not on a set schedule.

Course Objectives:

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Interview parents and children, and collect and organize demographic information
2. Plan, administer, score and interpret psycho-educational assessments
3. Integrate data from all aspects of assessment into meaningful, relevant findings
4. Translate assessment data into intervention recommendations
5. Develop familiarity with diagnoses typical to school-aged children and adolescents
6. Communicate results verbally and in writing to parents and other school professionals
7. Present and summarize case information succinctly and make educationally relevant decisions
8. Learn to work under supervision and in collaboration with peers and colleagues

Professional Standards

This course contributes to the development of knowledge and skills in the following National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) professional standards:

Standard II: Data Based Decision Making

Standard III: Consultation and Collaboration

Standard VI: Family School Collaboration

Standard VIII: Research, Program Evaluation, Legal, Ethical and Professional Practice

Element 8.2: Legal, Ethical and Professional Practice

Recommended Resources for writing mechanics:

Strunk, W., & White, E. B. (1999). *The elements of style* (4th Ed.). New York, NY: Longman.

<http://www.grammarbook.com/>

Recommended Resources relevant to interventions:

Canter, A., Paige, L., & Shaw, S. (Eds.). (2010). *Helping children at home and school*. Bethesda, MD: NASP.

Feifer, S. G., & De Fina, P. A. (2005). *The neuropsychology of mathematics: Diagnosis and intervention*. Middletown, MD: School Neuropsych Press.

Feifer, S. G., & Della Toffalo, D. A. (2006). *Integrating RTI with cognitive neuropsychology: A scientific approach to reading*. Middletown, MD: School Neuropsych Press.

Goldstein, S., & Mather, N. (1998). *Helping children overcome underachieving*. New York, NY: Wiley. ISBN: 0471170321

Goldstein, A. P. (1988). *The prepare curriculum: Teaching prosocial competencies*. Chicago, IL: Research Press.

Kirby, J. R. (1984). *Cognitive strategies and educational performance*. New York, NY: Academic press.

Mastropieri, M. A., & Scruggs, R. E. (1991). *Teaching students ways to remember: Strategies for learning mnemonically*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline. ISBN 0-914797-67-0.

Mastropieri, M. A., & Scruggs, T. E. (2000). *Inclusive classroom strategies for effective instruction*. Columbus, OH: Merrill. ISBN 0-13-496472-1.

Mascolo, J. T., Alfonso, V. C., Flanagan, D. P. (2014). *Essentials of planning, selecting, and tailoring interventions for unique learners*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

- Minskoff, E., & Allsopp, D. (2003). *Academic success strategies for adolescents with learning disabilities and ADHD*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- Naglieri, J. A., & Pickering, E. (2003). *Helping children learn: Intervention handouts for use in school and at home*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- National Association of School Psychologists (2011). *Principles for professional ethics*. Retrieved from <http://www.nasponline.org/standards/ethics/ethical-conduct-professional-practices.aspx>
- Pressley, M., & Woloshyn, V. (1995). *Cognitive strategy instruction that really improves children's academic performance* (2nd Ed.). Cambridge, MA: Brookline ISBN 1-57129-005-2
- Scheid, K. (1993). *Helping students become strategic learners*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline. ISBN 0-914797-85-9.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor.

Grading will be based primarily (70%) on the quality of your written psycho-educational reports for two comprehensive cases. For these two cases, students will receive a grade for the final, rather than initial drafts of the assessment reports. Grades will be assigned according to the **attached rubric**. It is my assumption and anticipation that your final drafts will be worthy of "A" grades. Failure to complete testing and final reports for the two comprehensive cases by the end of the semester will result in a grade of "F" unless an alternate plan has been approved by the student, supervisor, and the program director.

We recommend the following submission schedule for the FINAL draft of written reports:

- First Assessment Report – mid October
- Second Assessment Report – first week of December

You may initiate your second case when your FINAL, full draft of case 1 is submitted and your supervisor agrees that you are ready to move forward. You may initiate your third case when the second case is complete, which could occur over the winter holiday/January interterm period if your supervisor agrees.

Your final grade will be based on the following (285 points total):

1. Quality and accuracy of 2 reports, 100 pts each (35% each report = 70% of total grade)
2. Class participation and adherence to Clinic / ethical guidelines, 30 pts (~10% of total grade)
NOTE: Failure to comply with Clinic or ethical guidelines may result in a failing grade for Practicum.
3. Test administrations, scoring accuracy, interview, feedback, related basic skills, 55 pts (~20% of total grade)

Grades are given based on the following accumulated points:

(Please note: A course grade less than B- requires that you retake the course. A grade of "F" does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education. Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 [B average] to remain in good academic standing.)

- A+ = 99-100 (282-285)
A = 93-98 (265-281)
A- = 90-92 (256-264)
B+ = 87-89 (247-255)
B = 83-86 (236-246)
B- = 80-82 (228-235)

C = 70-79 (199-227)

F = below 60 (below 199)

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with relevant laws, standards of professional practice, ethical principles of psychologists, and policies of the university, college, division, GMU Cognitive Assessment Program, and the GMU Center for Psychological Services. Students who have questions about these expectations should consult with the instructor, clinical supervisor, or program director.

See also <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

Class Schedule:

Aug 23	Clinic Orientation – required for all 2 nd year school psychology students
Class 1 (Aug 27)	Course expectations, scheduling issues, supervision and clinic procedures, etc
Class 2 (Sept 3)	Share assigned case information, discuss development of test battery
Class 3 (Sept 10)	Share assigned case information- progress and pitfalls
Class 4 (Sept 17)	Interviewing, testing, scoring, case conceptualization discussion
Class 5 (Sept 24)	Review DSM 5 relevant diagnoses
Class 6 (Oct 1)	Developing evidenced based interventions
Class 7 (Oct 8)	Review: Report writing; parent interpretives/feedback
Class 8 (Nov 12)	Review cases: progress, issues
Class 9 (Dec 3)	Review cases, wrap-up

Remaining Classes: Issues and questions arising from individual assessments, and supervision and feedback according to the needs of the class and individual students (as determined by the class as the semester progresses).

If class needs to be canceled, the instructor will send an email to students as soon as possible. Your attendance is expected at every class; however, if circumstances arise that would cause you to miss class, please discuss the situation with the instructor as soon as possible.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).

- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .

**Rubric for Scoring Reports
Each report worth 100 points**

AREA	CONTENTS	CAUTIONS
Clarity of Writing 5 pts.	Report includes no grammar, syntax or punctuation errors; No professional jargon or “buzz” words; no slang terms unless used by client and these are presented in quotes.	Check for consistent use of present, past and future verb tense and use of pronouns; run spellcheck and grammarcheck on your final version; Search and destroy your “buzz” words.
Identifying Information 5 pts.	Accurate, properly formatted, complete	Double check data, esp. birthdates and age
Reason for Referral 5 pts	Who is referring? What are the specific questions for which answers are sought?	Can be short section.
Assessment Techniques 5 pts	Complete; May be presented alphabetically or grouped by type; please italicize titles	Include test acronyms, (e.g. WISC-IV) following formal & complete name; italicize titles.
Background Information	Family constellation; Developmental/medical, social and	Be alert to include information relevant to the referral question and/or the test findings &

15 pts	educational history. Include summary of results from previous evaluations, diagnoses, and medications.	recommendations; be sure to attribute source of information.
Observations 15 pts	Specifically describe (rather than label) behaviors you observed which could be relevant to the results reported.	MUST include your assessment of the validity of results and reasons for your judgment (this can be in a separate short section if you wish)
Test Results 25 pts	May be organized according to major areas of functioning or major themes. Accurate scoring, appropriate deductions made, logical connections made.	Work on integration of data from all sources; Include <u>brief</u> descriptions of each test and relevant subtests. First time mention of particular tests, full title is included. Thereafter, acronym may be used; Double check scores transcribed from appendix for accuracy.
Summary and Conclusions 10 pts	Succinct but complete; Provides a clinical summary and conclusions from the findings; Answers referral question; Does not repeat individual test results/scores; Includes a DSM Diagnosis if warranted	This highlights the take-home points of the assessment. Note: Some readers look only at the summary and recommendation sections.
Recommendations 10 pts	Relevant to both referral questions and findings.	Tie recommendations to findings. If you find a particular area of deficit, be sure to offer a strategy or intervention relevant to that deficit. Good intervention resources are invaluable here, as is your own judgment.
Score Summary 5 pts	Accurate, well-organized, formatted consistently, complete. Includes descriptions of the tests used and key for scores presented (e.g. scaled scores have a mean of 100 and sd of 15)	Double check for accuracy of scores and transcription from protocols; organize the scoring tables in the same fashion as your narrative – use same headers.