

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
School Psychology Program

SPSY 752-001 Advanced Assessment Practicum II
3 credits Spring 2021
Tuesday 10:30-1:10; synchronous, online

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

SPSY 709, SPSY 710, SPSY 722, SPSY 750, SPSY 751; or with permission of instructor

University Catalog Course Description

Provides practical, applied, supervised experience conducting comprehensive psychoeducational evaluations with children and adolescents to refine 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 a total of four comprehensive psychoeducational assessments. Two are completed in the training clinic under the supervision of a licensed psychologist, and two are completed in a school setting under the supervision of a certified school psychologist. Students are expected to further develop, enhance, and refine their assessment and psychological/educational diagnostic skills, and gain greater independence over the course of the semester in case conceptualization and report writing. Students meet monthly for group supervision, and meet as needed with their assigned supervisor to complete the four cases. The practicum requires a minimum of 75 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 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, CTOPP, TAPS, WRAML, WJ Cog, CPT, DKEFS, NEPSY*, etc.); achievement (e.g. *WIAT, KTEA, GORT, Nelson Denny Reading, etc.*); behavior rating scales (e.g. *BASC, ASEBA, CBRS, Conners 3, BRIEF*); social-emotional assessments (e.g. *Roberts, PAI-A, MACI, sentence completion, kinetic drawings, etc.*); interviews of the client and parent(s); and other methods as directed by the supervisors. Student and instructor and/or supervisor will consult on selection of instruments for individual cases.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered in seminar and practicum format. Seminar meets weekly for approximately 5 classes, then students schedule meetings for individual supervision with their supervisors. Class will meet again periodically through semester. The practicum requires a minimum of 75 hours outside of class time over the course of the semester. Practicum hours vary per week and are not on a set schedule.

Learner Outcomes or 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 and Community 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 and instruction:

- 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.
- 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.
- National Association of School Psychologists (2020). *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.

Assignments

Given differences in policy across school districts, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, the degree to which you will be directly involved in testing in the schools may vary. It is expected that you follow school guidelines and maintain safety, while engaging in as much active assessment work as is allowed/possible.

1. Complete two psycho-educational evaluations in the training clinic.
2. Actively participate in two school-based cases (e.g. attend meetings, administer tests if possible, review data, conceptualize case with supervisor, have knowledge of committee decisions and outcomes, assist with/observe parent feedback if possible). Your supervisor may provide data to you for a case that is currently in process, if you are unable to test.
3. Write a full report for two school-based cases. These reports may be based on data from your supervisor, from testing you've completed, or a combination thereof. This report will

be written in the style of a school-based report, not a clinic-based report. It is likely that you will follow your school-based supervisor's template. These reports should include de-identified information, reason for referral, background information (e.g., from file review), observations (either directly observed or based on supervisor information), test results, summary, and recommendations.

4. Write a one- to two-page, double spaced reflection for each school-based case in which you are involved. In the reflection, consider what you learned from each case. Reflect on the process of the case, not the data. For example, how was the conceptualization process? How were the meetings about this child? How did the school team function regarding the eligibility process and decision making? What worked well, and what issues arose? Was the outcome(s) expected or unexpected? How do you see things from the parent's point of view?
5. Maintain a log of your time spent engaged in practicum activities. This includes direct contact with students, supervision with your supervisors, preparing for testing, scoring tests and writing reports.

Timing of Reports

It is likely that you will be engaged in multiple cases simultaneously. To help you manage this process over the course of the semester, please note the following:

- Take your clinic case as soon as the semester starts.
- Be aware of timelines and deadlines, particularly in the school.
- Write and turn in your reports to your supervisor well ahead of any deadlines, if applicable.
- Complete one report by the middle of each month, starting in February.
- Adhere to a 72-hour turnaround time for report drafts (particularly for clinic-based cases).
- Remember that your semester ends in early to mid-May, but schools are in session through early to mid-June. You will need to complete and turn in your final report by the end of GMU's semester.

Supervision

You will have a university supervisor and a school-based supervisor. The university supervisor will supervise you for the assessment in the training clinic. Your school-based supervisor will supervise your assessment work in the schools. However, a university supervisor will be assigned to each case you conduct in the schools in order to provide consultation regarding case conceptualization as well as an initial read-through of your report.

Grading

Grading will be based primarily on the quality of your written psycho-educational reports for four cases. For the first case in the clinic and the first school-based case, students will receive a grade for the final draft of the reports. For the second clinic case and the second school-based cases, first attempts/drafts will be graded. 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 four 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.

Your grade will also be based on written reflections of your school cases, class participation (which includes case presentations of school and clinic cases), timeliness of your reports and interaction with your supervisor, and a practicum log.

Your final grade will be based on the following (500 points total):

Item	Points
Quality and accuracy of 4 reports, 100 pts each (see rubric)	400
Reflections of 2 school-based cases, 20 pts each	40
Class participation (including <u>case presentations</u>) and adherence to clinic, school and ethical guidelines NOTE: Failure to comply with clinic, school or ethical guidelines may result in a failing grade for Practicum.	20
Timeliness of report drafts (72-hour turnaround) and appropriate utilization of supervision (requesting assistance, keeping supervisor informed of progress)	20
Practicum log NOTE: include date, time spent engaged in the activity, and a brief description of the activity. Include total # of hours, and include signatures (student and supervisor)	20
Total	500

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 (495-500)

A = 93-98 (465-494)

A- = 90-92 (450-464)

B+ = 87-89 (435-449)

B = 83-86 (415-434)

B- = 80-82 (400-433)

C = 70-79 (350-399)

F = below 60 (below 350)

Professional Dispositions

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

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.

Class Schedule

Class 1 (Jan 26)	group supervision
Class 2 (Feb 2)	group supervision
Class 3 (Feb 9)	group supervision
Class 4 (Feb 16)	group supervision
Class 5 (Feb 23)	group supervision
Class 6 (Mar 23)	group supervision
Class 7 (Apr 27)	group supervision

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.

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

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 <https://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 <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).

- Students must silence all sound emitting devices 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 <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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 15 pts	Clinic cases, and where possible school cases, include: Family constellation; Developmental/medical, social and educational history. Include summary of results from previous evaluations, diagnoses, and medications.	Be alert to include information relevant to the referral question and/or the test findings & 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 (clinic cases only)	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.