

Syllabus
Psychological Assessment/Measurement
PSY 572 / SPED 572
Fall 2014

Online Class

Instructor: Michelle De La Garza, PhD

Email: michelle.delagarza@tamuc.edu

Required Text

[Cohen, R. J. & *Swerdlik*, M. E. \(2013\). Psychological Testing and Assessment: An Introduction to Tests and Measurement \(Eighth Edition\). New York: McGraw-Hill.](#)

Supplemental Readings:

American Psychological Association (2002). Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html (Standard 9: Assessment)

National Association of School Psychologists (2000). Principles of Professional Conduct. <http://www.nasponline.org/standards/ProfessionalCond.pdf> (Standard IV, C)

National Certification of Educational Diagnosticians Board (2007). Nationally Certified Educational Diagnostician (NCED) Program CODE OF ETHICS. <http://www.ncedb.org/images/file/ncedethics.pdf>

Catalog Description: This course is the first required course in the sequence of assessment courses and is planned to provide a framework for the development of assessment practices. Attention will be given to issues of measurement, identifying appropriate sources of diagnostic information, reliability, validity, identifying and selecting test instruments, conducting the assessment process in an ethical and considerate manner, interpreting norm references and criterion-referenced test scores.

PREREQUISITE

Graduate standing.

Goals:

1. To develop an understanding of the principles of assessment.
 2. To develop beginning competency in the application of assessment principles to selecting and using assessment instruments.
-

Student Standards of Conduct: Students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the TAMU-Commerce policies and procedures outlined in the TAMU-Commerce Graduate Catalog, including but not limited to TAMU-Commerce's principles of academic integrity (see Academic Honesty). In addition, students must demonstrate fitness to practice in the field of clinical psychology/special education. At minimum, classroom behaviors, discussion, professionalism, and coursework may be used to evaluate fitness to practice.

“All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.” Students are expected to follow the code of conduct in class described in the Student Handbook (Policies and Procedures, Code of Student Conduct). Violation of the code will lead to an initiation of the disciplinary processes described in the Handbook. Proper student conduct also includes maintaining a standard of academic honesty. This means that neither cheating nor plagiarism will be tolerated and students who engage in either will be subject to the disciplinary processes described in the Code of Student Conduct).

Plagiarism is representing another's work as one's own. You may use the ideas and words of another author so long as you give the appropriate credit, typically via citation. If you are going to use another's words, present it as a quotation. If you are going to use any person's ideas, provide credit to that person. Always cite, in the text, ideas drawn from other author's work. Plagiarism is a serious academic violation. It is listed as the first, in a long list of offenses, in the Student Handbook. University policy provides that the professor determines whether plagiarism has occurred. Plagiarism will result in a grade of F for the assignment and possibly the course. If the professor and the

department head agree, the issue can be referred to the University Discipline Committee. For graduate students, plagiarism commonly results in dismissal from the program. Ignorance is no excuse. Please see:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

When referencing the work of others, please cite your references in APA format. If you do not have an APA Manual 6th edition, there are many resources available on the Internet without having to purchase the book.

Support Services for On-line Students:

A help desk is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Please call 1-866-656-5511 or email

helpdesk@online.tamuc.edu.

Inclusion: Students requesting accommodations for disabilities must go through the Office of Student Disability and Services. For more information, please contact the Director of Disability Resources & Services, Gee Library, Room 132, Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835, Fax (903) 468-8148. E-mail:

StudentDisabilityServices@tamucommerce.edu.

Online Class Expectations:

This class is a web-based class. Online courses are a lot of work due to their fast pace. You have to be disciplined to be successful. If you are not, this may not be the course for you. Do not get behind in this course. If you do, you will not succeed.

Computer Competencies:

To participate in this course, you will need to have access to a computer that is connected to the Internet. The University can also act as an ISP for students that are in the DFW area or live near Commerce, but there are some limitations to this service (primarily, on-line time limits). Students should know how to send and receive email, access the internet, send and receive files, and use software needed to produce research, papers, and instructional presentations. You must also possess the computer

skills necessary to attach Word documents into the Dropbox, access websites, navigate eCollege, and spend the time needed to complete all assignments. If you are having technical difficulties, you need to get it corrected ASAP. Do not wait until the last minute to complete your assignments as you will not be able to do an adequate job. In addition to the chapters, we will also be looking at other multimedia selections. Please refer to the course shell for those links.

Attendance:

It is expected that you attend all classes per online weekly expectation. If you are to miss a class/discussion for any reason you must contact me prior to the class start time/end time either by email or phone call. Failing to do this will result in not being allowed to make up the work/assignment. If you have excessive absences you will be dropped from the class. Excessive absences will negatively impact your grade. More than three absences – incomplete assignments will automatically result in losing the opportunity to receive an A regardless of your other grades.

Dropping or Withdrawing from School:

Please check with me regarding these procedures.

Learning Objectives:

- a. Historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment;
- b. 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;
- c. Statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations;
- d. Reliability (i.e., theory of measurement error, models of reliability, and the use of reliability information)
- e. Validity (i.e., evidence of validity, types of validity, and the relationship between reliability and validity).

- f. Age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, disability, culture, spirituality, and other factors related to the assessment and evaluation of individuals, groups, and specific populations;
 - g. Strategies for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in counseling;
 - h. An understanding of general principles and methods of case conceptualization, assessment, and/or diagnosis of mental and emotional status; and
 - i. Ethical and legal considerations.
-

Methods of Evaluation:

Students are expected to complete all readings. Course grades will be determined by performance in the following areas:

Exams. There will be two exams during the semester, a midterm and final.

You are responsible for all lecture and reading materials. Exams may be rescheduled, without penalty, only when arrangements have been made in advance of the testing date. I expect people to come to me within the first week of class if they have conflicts with the exam dates. Make-ups will only be given in the case of verifiable medical or legal excuses. Verifiable means that written documentation is provided (e.g., signed doctors' notes, court appearance tickets, newspaper obituaries). The final decision concerning make-up exams rests with the instructor.

Written report. Each student will write a 2 - 4 page paper on an assessment instrument. The guidelines for constructing and submitting this paper will be uploaded to eCollege. If you do not turn in your paper on time and have no valid excuse, you will receive a grade of zero.

Presentations. Each student will create one PowerPoint presentation that needs to be uploaded to eCollege under shared documents. The topic of the presentations should relate to the field of assessment. Examples might include: multicultural issues in assessment, controversies in assessment, or the use of a specific instrument (provide a brief overview of its intended use as well as its technical features). I encourage you to pursue a topic that is of interest to you. If you are unsure about the appropriateness of a

topic, just ask. For the presentation you are to create a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation must also include discussion questions or activities designed to further the class's understanding of the material.

Discussions. These will be required as described in the Discussion tab of eCollege. Your comments should be substantive and civil, as different viewpoints will be expected and encouraged. Posts that are not civil, per my judgment, will receive a score of 0. You will be asked to post your comments in the threaded discussion section. The purpose of the discussion post is to get you focused on the content. Your posts will be graded for **depth of understanding/thought and detail**.

Your grade will be determined as follows:

Midterm 20%

Final Exam 20%

Written Report 20%

Discussions 25%

Presentation 15%

Final grades are based on the total number of points earned during the term in accordance, generally, with the following levels of proficiency: A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = below 60.

NASP Standards Covered (for School Psychologists)

Course Objectives (Links to NASP Model 10 Domains of Practice):

2.1: Data-Based Decision Making & Accountability: *You will gain knowledge of varied methods of assessment and data collection for identifying strengths and needs, developing effective services and programs, and measuring progress and outcomes.*

2.5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning *You will gain knowledge of school and systems structure, organization, and theory; general and special education; technology resources; and evidence-based school practices that promote learning and mental health.*

2.8: Diversity in Development and Learning *You will gain knowledge of individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse student characteristics; principles and research related to diversity factors for children, families, and schools, including factors related to culture, context, and individual and role difference; and evidence-based strategies to enhance services and address potential influences related to diversity*

TExES Competencies for Diagnosticians

Competency 002: The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity and the significance of individual diversity for evaluation, planning, and instruction.

Competency 003: The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of student assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision making.

Competency 004: The educational diagnostician selects and administers appropriate formal and informal assessments and evaluations.

Competency 005: The educational diagnostician applies skills for interpreting formal and informal assessments and evaluations.

Competency 007: The educational diagnostician understands the use of appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning, and instructional strategies for developing students' behavioral and social skills.

Competency 008: The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of professional practices, roles, and responsibilities and the philosophical, legal and ethical foundations of evaluation related to special education.

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

Week	Topic	Reading
1	Introduction to Class	Syllabus
2	Psychological Testing and Assessment	Chapter 1
3	Historical, Cultural, and Legal/Ethical Considerations	Chapter 2
4	Statistics Refresher	Chapter 3
5	Tests and Testing Reliability	Chapter 4 & 5
6	Validity	Chapter 6
7	Test Development	Chapter 8
8	Midterm	
9	Intelligence and its Measurement	Chapter 9
10	Tests of Intelligence	Chapter 10
11	Assessment for Education	Chapter 11
12	Personality Assessment: An overview	Chapter 12
13	Clinical and Counseling Assessment	Chapter 14
14	Neuropsychological Assessment	Chapter 15
15	Final Exam	

****this is a tentative outline, subject to change****