

EDP 630 Principles of Psychological Measurement
Fall 2000; Wednesday 1-3:30, DH 131
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Purpose:

The purpose of this course is to help students develop a conceptual model of assessment that will guide them through the assessment process from initial client referral to final report dispensation. This course will provide students with opportunities to develop the skills needed to become reflective decision-makers throughout the assessment process.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, each student should be able to:

1. Articulate the process of test construction and validation.
2. Select tests and evaluate them using basic measurement constructs such as validity, reliability, norms, standardization.
3. Conduct an assessment and interpret the results in a professional report.
4. Describe the categories of assessment instruments and exhibit a general familiarity with several measures from each category.
5. Demonstrate working knowledge of the important ethical and legal issues related to group and individual assessment.
6. Consider issues regarding racism, sexism, and cultural diversity when making assessment decisions.
7. Articulate current trends and controversies in the field of psychological assessment.

Summary of Required Learning Activities: (see handouts for detailed requirements for the writing assignments)

Required Reading:

Drummond, R. J. (2000). Appraisal procedures for counselors and helping professionals (4th edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Supplementary reading (on reserve in Education Library):

American Psychiatric Association (1994). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (4th edition).

Cohen, R.J., Serdlik, M.E., & Phillips, S.M. (1998). Psychological Testing and Assessment: An Introduction to Tests and measurement. Mountain View, California: Mayfield Publishing.

Quizzes: (20 points). There are 3 multiple-choice quizzes that will each be worth 10 points toward your final grade. I will drop the lowest quiz grade. There are no make-up quizzes, so if you miss one (regardless of the reason) you receive 0 points for that quiz.

Small Group Scavenger Hunt: (5 points). The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to resources that will be helpful to you in selecting and evaluating tests, to acquaint you with current issues and controversies related to assessment, and to give you a “head start” on ideas and resources for your thesis paper.

Group Position Paper: (8 points). The purpose of this assignment is to develop collaborative leadership skills, to get some practice writing a thesis paper before you “strike out on your own” later in the course, and to increase your knowledge of how to go about making sound, well-reasoned assessment decisions. Finally, this assignment will increase your familiarity with the three assessment instruments that you will be working with later in the semester. Your task, in brief, is to decide the merits of using the K-BIT, SCL-90, and BDHI as a standard intake battery at a community health center and justify your decision in a 5-7 page paper. (See handout for more detailed instructions)

Mock assessment reaction paper: (2 points). Some believe that a clinician should never give a test that he/she hasn’t taken him or herself. Practice administering the assessment battery to one of your classmates. Then, score and interpret *your own* battery. Write a one-page, double-spaced reaction paper defending your position on one of the following statements: 1) I learned more from taking the tests than administering the tests; 2) I learned more from administering the tests than taking the tests myself; 3) I didn’t learn anything from this exercise that I didn’t already know.

Assessment Reports: (15 points each) Each student will be asked to administer, score, interpret, and write **two** assessment reports based on the results of a brief clinical interview, behavioral observations, and 3 standardized assessment measures (K-BIT, SCL-90, BDHI). Assessment clients will be recruited from a pool of volunteers who will give written informed consent prior to their participation in the exercise. Because this is a training exercise, volunteer participants are to be informed before being evaluated that **no results will be provided to them or any agency**. Please turn in all test protocols with the assessment reports. The reports will be 2-3 pages long and will be due October 11 and November 1.

Thesis Paper: (35 points). Write a paper (8-10 pages, double spaced) addressing an interesting problem or question, appropriate to this course, that will require a combination of library research and your own analytical skills to answer. This assignment has been broken into the following “pieces” which are due on the dates indicated on the syllabus.

- ❖ Problem/Thesis statement
- ❖ Summary of 3 journal articles (5 points)
- ❖ Proposal
- ❖ Draft 1 for peer review
- ❖ Abstract of final argument (200 words)
- ❖ Final paper (30 points)

Grading:

Grades will be assigned as follows:

90-100 points = A

80-89 points = B

70-79 points = C

below 70 = E

Policies:

Attendance and active class participation is expected and required. Please refer to the University Bulletin (p. 49) for the definition of an excused absence. All other absences will be considered unexcused.

Penalty for late assignments: Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period and will be immediately penalized 10% of the total point value and then an additional 10% for each 24 hours that the assignment is late. If you are having difficulty with an assignment, please contact the professor or the teaching assistant as soon as possible. **To complete all activities at the level of excellence expected of graduate students (and new professionals in our field) you should plan to attend all class periods and spend 8-10 hours per week outside of class working on your learning activities.**

Test Security and Responsibility: Students enrolled in this course are responsible for all test materials loaned to them by the department or the instructor. The contents of the test kits should be complete when they are returned, and students are to adhere to the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct guidelines concerning the use and protection of psychological test instruments and data.

Quality Assurance Contract: The Quality Assurance Contract (see the student handbook) is an honor code in the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology. Each student should complete and hand in this contract with each assessment report. Implicit in this contract is the avoidance of cheating, (i.e. pretending to assess an individual, when in fact you or someone else not described in the report completed the protocols. Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses that carry with them the minimum penalty of an "E" in the course and the maximum penalty of expulsion from the University. Therefore, students should take this contract seriously and realize that their academic future rests upon their honesty and integrity and their ability to uphold the contract.

Learning Module 1: Selecting, Administering, Evaluating, and Scoring Tests	Class activities/topics	Learning Activities due:
8/23	Introduction and Overview	
8/30	Measurement and Statistical Concepts	Bring in names and phone numbers of volunteers. Bring money to purchase 3 testing packets. <i>Read Chapters 1-3. Cohen et al Chapters 3-6 (suppl).</i>
9/6	Selection and Administration	Results of group scavenger hunt (see handout). <i>Read Chapters 4-6</i>
9/13	Scoring and Interpretation Quiz on module one readings	Group Position Paper on KBIT, SCL-90, BDI (see handout and grading criteria).
Learning Module 2: Applied Clinical Assessment, Diagnosis, and Report Writing		
9/20	Clinical Interviewing, Behavioral Observation and Assessment	Mock assessment of your partner and reaction paper(1 page, double-spaced). See “Learning Activities” for instructions. <i>Read Chapter 17</i>
9/27	Using the DSM-IV	Conduct Assessment #1; turn in Problem/Thesis statement . <i>Read Introductory material in DSM-IV and familiarize yourself with the general organization.</i>
10/4	Writing Psychological Reports	Summary of three journal articles due (see handout). <i>Read Chapter 23.</i>
10/11	Communicating Results	Assessment report #1 due. <i>Read chapter 22.</i>

Tentative class schedule
EDP 630 (continued)

Learning Module 3: Categories of Psychological Testing		
10/18	Intelligence	Conduct Assessment # 2; Thesis proposal due ; <i>Read Chapter 7. Cohen et al. chap 8-9 (suppl)</i>
10/25	Achievement	<i>Read Chapter 9.</i>
11/1	Personality	Assessment report # 2 due. <i>Read Chapter 11. Cohen et al. 11-12 (suppl).</i>
11/8	Adjustment Quiz on module 3 readings	<i>Read chapter 12.</i>

Learning Module 4: Ethics, Professional issues, Current Controversies		
11/15	Multicultural assessment and issues of diversity	Draft of thesis paper (2 copies) submitted for peer review. <i>Read chapters 18-20.</i>
11/22	Peer-review workshop	Peer Reviews (see handout)
11/29	Legal and Ethical issues in assessment	<i>Read chapter 24.</i> Abstract of final thesis argument (@200 words).
12/6	Current issues and controversies	Thesis Paper due. <i>Read chapter 25</i>
Final Exam 12/11 (1:00)	Quiz on module 4 readings (optional for those who are satisfied with prior quiz grades)	

EDP 630 Group Scavenger Hunt

Purpose: This activity will help you become familiar with important resources and information related to assessment that you will use in other assignments for this course and (more importantly) in your professional life.

Instructions: Work with your assigned group to complete this scavenger hunt and submit your “findings” to me on the due date listed in the syllabus. You may divide the labor among members of your group, but each and every group member must acknowledge that he/she knows how to use each of the resources. The winning group will receive a valuable “prize.”

Task 1: Imagine that you are responsible for evaluating an after-school program for adolescent girls (ages 12-17) that is designed to increase their self-confidence and leadership skills. You need to figure out how to assess the girls’ self-confidence and leadership skills both before and after the program so that you tell if the program helped (pre/post test design). What assessment strategy (including specific tests) do you recommend and why? **What to bring back:** Your recommendation and reasons justifying it.

Task 2: What kinds of assessment do applied mental health professionals actually use “Out in the Real World?” Ask two counselors working in different mental health settings about the kinds of assessments they use and how they view the role of assessment in their work. **What to bring back:** Names of the counselors you talked to, types of assessments they use in their work, and one sentence summary of their general position on assessment.

Task 3: Your group will soon be writing a position paper either defending or attacking the use of the SCL-90, BDI-II, and K-BIT as part of a standard intake assessment battery for clients at a community mental health center. What can you find in the MMY that will help you write this paper? **What to bring back:** Reference citations (at least one for each instrument) that you plan to use to write your position paper.

Task 4: Professional assessment journals will also be useful in writing your position paper. Find at least two articles that you can use in your position paper. **What to bring back:** Reference citation and call numbers for the articles.

Task 5: The field of assessment is riddled with controversy. Support this thesis by locating 5 controversies or disagreements that are currently raging among experts in the field. (This will help you begin to explore potential paper topics!) Your textbook and some current issues of professional assessment journals should help you with this task. **What to bring back:** Five controversial questions that are currently being debated in the discipline.

Task 6: What do the licensure requirements for Psychological Examiners and masters-level professional counselors have to say about level of competence in assessment? In other words, what do you need to know and do to be licensed in the state of Kentucky (This should be available on-line)? **What to bring back:** List of requirements.

Task 7: Browse through popular magazines and daily newspapers for current events that involve psychological assessment. What seem to be the “hot” issues right now? (This will help you generate ideas for your Thesis papers.) **What to bring back:** Three articles (or clear photocopies) and one sentence explaining the significance of each article for the use of psychological assessment.

EDP 630: Group Position Paper

Purpose: Collaborative teamwork is a “must” in our field. Jointly authoring papers, serving on multidisciplinary treatment teams and consulting with policy-making committees are common professional activities. The purpose of this assignment is to develop collaborative leadership skills, to get some practice writing a thesis paper before you “strike out on your own” later in the course, and to increase your knowledge of how to go about making sound, well-reasoned assessment decisions. Finally, this assignment will increase your familiarity with the three assessment instruments that you will be working with later in the semester.

Task: Your group is the professional staff of a brand-new community mental health center in a previously under-served part of rural Kentucky. You will open your doors in just a few weeks and anticipate that you will see a wide variety of clients (children, adolescents, adults) for individual, family, and group counseling. Your center is (of course) strapped for funds and all of you are dedicated to providing excellent psychological services. It has been proposed that you adopt a standard assessment battery to give all clients who are seeking services. In addition to a structured clinical interview, it is proposed that this battery include the Beck Depression Inventory, The Symptom Check List-90, and the K-BIT. Your group (professional staff) is responsible for reaching a consensus and instituting a written policy prior to the opening of the clinic. Write a paper (5-7 pages) that will institute your policy decision and provide a detailed rationale.

Hint:

Read as much as you can about the three assessment instruments that have been proposed as the battery. Look carefully at the test manuals, look up reviews in MMY, etc. Perhaps, after your careful research and group deliberations, you will decide that some substitutions or alterations need to be made to best serve your client population. Whatever your final recommendation, justify it.

Grading Criteria:

1. Is there a clear recommendation made? (1 point).
2. Is the recommendation supported with appropriate arguments and evidence? (5 points)
3. Are the arguments and evidence accompanied by APA-style citations (where appropriate)? (1 point).
4. Is the paper well-written? (Clear sentences, paragraphs and transitions; accurate grammar, spelling, punctuation) (1 point).

EDP 630: Journal Article Summary instructions

For each of three journal articles to be discussed in your thesis paper, write ONE effective, precise, clear summary sentence that is 23-25 words long. List full citations in correct APA style.

EDP 630: Thesis Proposal Instructions

Purpose: The purpose of this exercise is to give you early feedback on your paper and prevent last-minute rush jobs that usually guarantee less than excellent, thoughtfully-developed, well-written papers. Your proposal should clearly and concisely address the following:

1. What is the “problem” or question that you intend to address?
2. Why is this an interesting question? Why is it a “problem” or controversy? Why is it significant?
3. How far along are you in your thinking and research? What do you expect to discover? Are you ready yet to formulate a thesis statement? If so, what is it?
4. Attach a working bibliography (in correct APA style!) of the sources you have used so far. Write short annotations (summary paragraph) for the material you have already read.

EDP 630: Instructions for Thesis Paper

Write a paper (8-10 pages, double spaced) addressing an interesting problem or question, appropriate to this course, that will require a combination of library research and your own analytical skills to answer. The quality of your paper will depend on the quality of your initial question, so plan to devote considerable time and energy to the question-formulation stage. Use the introduction of your essay to engage your reader’s interest in the problem that you are addressing. Show your reader what makes this question both significant and problematic. The body of the paper should be your own response to this question made as persuasively as possible through appropriate argument, evidence, and analysis. This project is broken into “steps” so that you can get feedback all along the way. Consult the syllabus for due dates for the Problem/Thesis statement, the journal article summaries, the proposal, the first draft for peer review, the abstract, and the final paper. With the final paper, submit all previous “steps” and rough drafts of your work.

Grading Criteria for Thesis Papers

1. Does the paper have a clear thesis?
2. Does the thesis address an appropriate question or controversy in the field of assessment?
3. Is the paper free from long stretches of quotations and summaries that exist only for their own sakes and remain unanalyzed?
4. Can the writer produce complete sentences?
5. Is the paper free of basic grammatical errors?
6. Are citations and references in APA style?

If the answer to any of these questions is “no,” I will give the paper the equivalent of a “C.” (23/30 points). If the answer to more than one of the questions is “no,” its grade will be even lower.

For the papers that met the previous criteria, I will assess the following:

7. How thoughtful is the paper? Does it show real originality?
8. How adequate is the thesis? Does it respond to its question or topic in a full and interesting way?
9. How well organized is the paper? Does the author stick to the point? Does every paragraph contain a clear topic sentence? If not, is another kind of organizing principle at work? Are the transitions well made? Does it have a real conclusion, or simply a stopping place?
10. Is the style efficient, not wordy or unclear?
11. Above all, can I hear a lively, intelligent, interesting human voice speaking to me (or to another audience of interested readers) as I read the paper?

Depending on the answers to these questions, I will give the paper the either A (28-30/30 points), A- (27/30), B+ (26/30), B (25/30 points), or B- (24/30).

Instructions for In-class Peer-review workshop:

Prior to this workshop, please carefully read the two papers you will be reviewing and make a few notes. **Bring the two drafts (and your notes) with you to class for use in the workshop.**

Class members will work together in pairs. Each pair will exchange drafts with another pair. Each pair will collaborate to compose a jointly written review of EACH of the two drafts they have received.

For EACH draft:

1. Write out the question, problem, or issue that this draft addresses.
2. Write out the writer's complete thesis statement. (Note: If you have trouble with #1 and #2, concentrate on helping the writer clarify the problem and thesis.)
3. Note with a wavy line in the margins all places where you got confused as a reader.
4. Write out your assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the writer's ideas. Assuming that the quality of thinking in a paper is of utmost importance, respond to the ideas in this draft. Where do you disagree with the writer?
5. Reread the draft, looking for quality of support. Does the writer offer sufficient details to support the argument (data, statistics, quotations, textual references, personal examples)? Does the writer need to do more research?
6. Write out at least two things that you think are particularly strong about this draft.
7. Make three or four directive statements recommending specific changes that the writer should make in the next draft.

Group Member Evaluation submitted by: _____

Group member: _____

Rate the following behaviors on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1=never and 5=always.

- ___ Attended scheduled meetings on time.
- ___ Followed through on specific work commitments.
- ___ Contributed substantially to final product.
- ___ Cooperated with other group members to meet assignment requirements.

Group member: _____

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