



Psychological Assessment: Personality

PSYC 710
Spring 2010

Syllabus

Course:	PSYC 710 Psychological Assessment: Personality
Instructor:	Grover C. Foehlinger, Jr., Ph.D., NCSP
Phone:	703-993-5127; 571-480-8777; 703-352-0035 (fax)
Office Hours:	Tuesday 8:30 – 10:30; Thursday, 12:00 – 2:00; and by appointment
Lecture:	Tuesday 12:00 - 2:40 p.m. (Center conference room)
TA:	Jaynie Trageser (atragese@gmu.edu)
Lab:	Tuesday 3:00 – 4:50 p.m. (Center conference room)

Course Description: PSYC 710 is a study of major psychological instruments used in clinical assessment of school-aged children and adolescents; the nature, limitations, and predictive value of these methods; and the procedures for selection, administration, scoring, and interpretation of techniques for evaluation of personality.

Goal: The goal of this course is to prepare graduate students in school psychology to assess the social, emotional, and behavioral adjustment of children and adolescents in educational and clinical settings. The course provides an overview of relevant personality theory and psychometric theory, and students learn a variety of techniques that can be applied in a diagnostic problem-solving model.

Course Objectives: Students will attain the goal by demonstrating proficiency in the following objectives:

1. Identify basic theories of personality on which diagnostic procedures are based.
2. Understand basic principles of instrumentation for objective and projective tests that purport to measure personality or adjustment in children.
3. Evaluate the reliability, validity, and utility of objective and projective tests.
4. Conduct interviews with children and with parents or guardians of children to collect relevant diagnostic data pertaining to social, emotional, and behavioral adjustment.
5. Select psychological tests relevant to specific referral questions; administer tests in a manner consistent with prescribed procedures; and score the tests accurately.

6. Synthesize diagnostic data from multiple sources; formulate valid interpretations of the data; select appropriate educational and clinical recommendations; and document results, diagnostic conclusions, and recommendations in a written report.

Required Texts:

Exner, J. (2001). *Rorschach workbook for the comprehensive system- 5th Edition*. Ashville, NC: Rorschach Workshops.

Reynolds, C. R., & Kamphaus, R. W. (2003). *Handbook of psychological & educational assessment of children: Personality, behavior, and context, Second Edition*. New York: Guilford.

Sattler, J. M. (2005). *Assessment of children: Behavioral, social, and clinical foundations, Fifth Edition*. La Mesa, CA: Jerome M. Sattler Publisher.

Recommended Text:

Exner, J. E. (2000). *A primer for Rorschach interpretation*. Asheville, NC: Rorschach Workshops.

Relevant Readings:

American Psychological Association (2002). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct. *American Psychologist*, 57, 1060-1073. Also available at <http://www.apa.org/ethics/>

National Association of School Psychologists, Professional Standards Revision Committee (2000). *Principles for professional ethics*. Available at <http://www.nasponline.org/pdf/ProfessionalCond.pdf>

Mash, E. J., & Barkley, R. A. (2007). *Assessment of childhood disorders*. New York: Guilford.

Policies and Procedures: Academic policies and procedures are established by the University's College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Additional information about these policies and procedures can be found at <http://chss.gmu.edu/gradpolicies>.

Attendance: You are responsible for all information from each class and lab meeting. If you miss a class, you should borrow notes from a classmate. You are also responsible for submitting assignments on the date due, even if you are not in class.

- Last Day to Add or Drop without Tuition Penalty February 2, 2010
- Last Day to Drop February 19, 2010

Honor Code: Compliance with the GMU Honor Policy is expected. At the same time, if you choose, I encourage you to study together for tests and exams unless otherwise noted. You may also want to practice assessments with one another.

Special Issues: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations (e.g., extended time, large type, etc.), please see me during the first week of class and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Course Structure and Requirements: The format of this course includes both didactic lectures and experiential labs. Reading assignments for lectures are given at the end of the syllabus. The materials are to be read before the designated lecture. Reading the materials is essential to getting what you will need from this class in order to be a proficient school psychologist. All materials will not be covered in class. Your lab will primarily be devoted to learning the Rorschach.

Grading: The percentage of the final grade contributed by each of the eight requirements is as follows:

Mid-term exam	15
Cumulative final exam	25
Report of comprehensive psychological evaluation	30
Report of behavioral observation	10
Taped interview with child and written comments	10
Taped interview with adult and written comments	10
Total	100

The final grade will be determined on the following scale:

A+ = 97-100%
A = 93-96%
A- = 90-92%
B+ = 87-89%
B = 83-86%
B- = 80-82%

NB: If your grade is within a borderline range, class and lab participation will be weighed in your favor.

Interviews: You will be required to conduct two interviews: one with a parent or guardian of a child and one with a school-aged child. You will be expected to secure informed consent and record (audio or video) the interview for later review. In addition, you will compose a brief written reflection of your experience with the interview (i.e., what – if anything – made you anxious, what techniques you used, what went well, what you would do differently the next time, etc.).

Behavioral Observation: You will prepare a written summary of a classroom behavioral observation based on information provided in class. The format of the summary will be presented in class.

Comprehensive Report: You will be required to write one comprehensive assessment report. The assessment data (interview information and test results) will be provided. Although the assessment data are based on a “real” case, all identifying information will have been changed. The focus of the case will be on the impact of social, emotional, and behavioral factors on adjustment and educational performance. At the same time, cognitive and achievement results will be provided and will need to be integrated into the report. The assignment will incorporate four components of the report: 1.) reason for referral, background information, and behavioral observations; 2.) cognitive abilities, executive processes, and academic achievement; 3.) social, emotional, and behavioral adjustment and, if relevant, social-adaptive functioning; and 4.) comprehensive integration of all data, diagnostic impressions, and both educational and clinical recommendations. The first three components will be due during the semester, and the fourth component will be appended to the previous sections to form a final, comprehensive report.

Exams: The mid-term and final exams will include objective questions and applied problems.

All assignments must be completed by their due dates (see attached schedule). Grade deductions may occur for assignments not submitted by the date due.