

Peabody College at Vanderbilt University
HDC6110 – Appraisal and Assessment – CMHC Students

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Class Meeting: Wednesdays 4:10-7:00 p.m.
Prerequisites: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Survey of appraisal, assessment, and standardized instruments used by counselors in the areas of education, psychology, and mental health.

Summary: This course surveys the history and application of educational and psychological measurement with emphasis on applications in counseling. The objective is to help you to become "informed consumers" of standardized measurement instruments used in school, mental health, and marriage and family settings. An "informed consumer" must know how to select, administer, interpret, and provide feedback on the results of psychological tests. Therefore, this course will initially emphasize the "science" of appraisal, focusing on the process of test selection, use, and scoring. Based on this foundation, the course will introduce the "art" of appraisal; the communication of results in a manner that helps clients understand themselves better and improve the quality of their lives. Finally, the course will discuss the responsibility counselors have to use assessments ethically and to understand the unique strengths and limitations of the counseling profession.

RESOURCES

Required Textbook and Readings

Erford, B. T. (Ed.). (2013). *Assessment for counselors* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.
And additional readings as assigned, which are available on the Internet or through the library.

Recommended Texts

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
Erford, B. T., Hays, D. G., Crockett, S., & Miller, E. M. (2020). *Mastering the NCE and CPCE* (3rd ed.). Columbus, OH: Pearson Merrill.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL OUTCOMES

(NOTE: CACREP standards are coded below and are assessed via midterm exam [M], final exam [F], test review project [T], and psychoeducational report [R].)

At the conclusion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Be familiar with the philosophical and historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment. (II.F.7.a [M])
2. Comprehend the multiple factors which influence examinee performance and preparing for assessment meetings. (II.F.7.b [M; R])
3. Develop an understanding of, and apply, common statistical concepts in measurement such as probability, central tendency, variability, scales of measurement, and shapes and types of distributions. (II.F.7.g [M])
4. Integrate ACA ethical standards guiding assessment into a general understanding of ethical counseling practice. (II.F.7.m [M; R])
5. Critically interpret and utilize correlational procedures. (II.F.7.g [F, P])
6. Understand the basic concepts and differentiate between standardized and nonstandardized testing, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced, and individual vs group assessment. (II.F.7.f [M, P])
7. Demonstrate ethical competence in strategies for selection, administration and statistical interpretation of techniques for assessing diverse student academic, career, and personal/social development. (II.F.7.m [M; P; R])
8. Develop an understanding of the importance of measures and use of reliability, particularly test-retest (temporal) and alternate- (equivalent-) form stability, internal consistency and standard error of measurement, and the factors influencing a test score's reliability. (II.F.7.h [F; P; R])
9. Comprehend the importance of validity, including content, construct and empirical validity, in measurement, its association with reliability, and apply it to interpretation. (II.F.7.h [F; P; R])
10. Understand how tests, singly and as a battery, can be used to facilitate improved educational and clinical decision-making, case conceptualization and diagnosis of mental/emotional status. (II.F.7.l [F; R])
11. Critique, observe, participate in, and enact demonstrations of a wide variety of standardized instruments used with P-12 and adult populations including intelligence, developmental, aptitude, achievement, perceptual/neuropsychology, personality, and behavioral tests, environmental assessment, performance assessment, behavioral observations, symptom checklists, aggression, self-harm, suicide assessment, and computer-managed and assisted assessment applications. (II.F.7.c, i-k [F; P; R]; V.G.1.e [F; P; R])
12. Demonstrate proficiency in evaluating the utility of tests for counseling purposes from a consumer's perspective [P].
13. Understand procedures for identifying trauma and abuse (II.F.7.d [F; R])
14. Understand how assessments are used for diagnosis and treatment planning (II.F.7.e [F; R])
15. Identify characteristics, risk factors, and warning signs of students at risk for mental health and behavioral disorders, including self-harm, suicide, and aggression (II.F.7.c; V.G.2.g [F; R]).

CURRICULUM STANDARDS ADDRESSED

2016 CACREP Clinical Mental Health Counseling Standards

Standard		How Measured in HDC6110
5.C.1.e	psychological tests and assessments specific to clinical mental health counseling	Final, Review, Report
5.C.3.a	intake interview, mental status evaluation, biopsychosocial history, mental health history, and psychological assessment for treatment planning and caseload management	Midterm, Final, Report,

2016 CACREP Core Standards

Standard		How Measured in HDC6110
2.F.7.a	historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment and testing in counseling	Midterm
2.f.7.b	methods of effectively preparing for and conducting initial assessment meetings	Midterm, Report
2.f.7.c	procedures for assessing risk of aggression or danger to others, self-inflicted harm, or suicide	Final, Report
2.f.7.d	procedures for identifying trauma and abuse and for reporting abuse	Final, Report
2.f.7.e	use of assessments for diagnostic and intervention planning purposes	Midterm, Report
2.f.7.f	basic concepts of standardized and non-standardized testing, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessments, and group and individual assessments	Midterm, Review
2.f.7.g	statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations	Midterm, Final
2.f.7.h	reliability and validity in the use of assessments	Final, Review
2.f.7.i	use of assessments relevant to academic/ educational, career, personal, and social development	Final, Review, Report
2.f.7.j	use of environmental assessments and systematic behavioral observations	Final
2.f.7.k	use of symptom checklists, and personality and psychological testing	Report, Review, Final
2.f.7.l	use of assessment results to diagnose developmental, behavioral, and mental disorders	Final, Review, Report
2.f.7.m	ethical and culturally relevant strategies for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessment and test results	Midterm, Report

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Attendance Policy

On-time attendance at every class meeting is expected. Five points will be taken off the final course grade for each additional absence after the first absence. Tardiness of 15 minutes or more will be considered an absence. Leaving early before class is dismissed will also be considered an absence. Notify the instructor prior to class if you have an emergency that requires accommodation.

Sexual Misconduct and Intimate Partner Violence

All faculty must report allegations of sexual misconduct and intimate partner violence to the Title IX Coordinator. In addition, all faculty are obligated to report any allegations of discrimination to Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Disability Services (EAD).

Use of Electronic Devices

As school counselors in training, it is essential that you develop the disposition of being fully present in the moment and able to avoid distractions to the counseling and learning process. Please be respectful of your instructor and fellow classmates by silencing your phone and putting it away. Engaging in activities not related to the course during sessions (e.g., gaming, email, chat, text, etc.) will result in a significant reduction in your grade at the discretion of the instructor. Notify the instructor prior to class if you have an emergency that requires accommodation.

Disability Statement

Vanderbilt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities that may affect your ability to complete course assignments or otherwise satisfy course requirements. If you require accommodations, please contact the Office of Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Disability Services at Baker Building, Suite 108 (615)322-4705 (V/TDD) to discuss and determine any accommodations. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in Vanderbilt University classes and have not contacted them, please do so immediately. You are also encouraged to apprise your instructor(s) privately regarding this matter, ideally no later than the second week of the semester, to ensure that your needs are met appropriately and in a timely manner.

Diversity Statement

It is intended that students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives will be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. Materials and activities are intended to be respectful of diversity including affective orientation, gender identity, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, religion, culture, and other areas of human difference. We are all constantly striving to improve ourselves in this area, so your suggestions for improvement are encouraged and appreciated.

Trigger Warning Note

At times this semester, we may discuss topics that may be disturbing and even traumatizing to some students. If you ever feel the need to "step outside" during one of these discussions, either for a short time or for the rest of the class session, you may always do so without academic penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to this material, either with the class or instructor, the instructor would welcome such a conversation as an appropriate part of your professional development. Learning to manage personal reactions to potentially disturbing material that our clients discuss is an important part of preparing to be a counselor. (Adapted from: <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2014/05/29/essay-why-professor-adding-trigger-warning-his-syllabus>).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Each student is expected to: (1) complete all reading assignments before class, (2) actively participate in discussions and exercises, (3) regularly check Vanderbilt email, and (4) access documents and materials as assigned through the online system (BrightSpace).

Non-Graded Course Components (Debit Components)

Class Participation/Facilitation (Required)

Regular participation in class discussions and in-class exercises is expected and required. For each class period, you should develop three multiple choice questions/answers based upon the readings that contribute to our understanding of the concepts or their application to counseling or other relevant issues. E-mail them to the instructor ahead of time. The goal of class participation is to think critically (and challenge others to think critically) about the readings and not just demonstrate that you read or understand the readings.

Assignment Policies (Required)

Admission to the profession of counseling means acceptance of and submission to the principles of scholarship and writing proficiency required of a master's degree. APA6 is a recommended text for this course and students are expected to be thoroughly familiar with the application of this publishing format. Failure to adhere to APA6 will result in a failure for a specific course component. As professionals-in-training, all counseling master's degree candidates take very seriously their responsibility to write effectively and professionally. All assignments are due by start time of class on the due date, and must be submitted electronically. Late assignments will not receive full credit, as determined at the discretion of the instructor. If you have special circumstances that prevent you from completing the assignment on time, please speak to the instructors *before* the due date for the assignment.

Graded Course Components

1. Midterm Examination (25%)

Each student will complete a midterm examination consisting of multiple-choice questions and an extended response item(s). Information from all assigned readings and classes may be included on the exam. The midterm accounts for 25% of the final grade.

2. Final Examination (25%)

Each student will complete a final examination consisting of multiple-choice and an extended response question. Information from all assigned readings and lectures may be included on the exams. The final accounts for 25% of the final grade.

3. Construct a Report (25%)

Each student will administer score and interpret multiple tests and interviews to a volunteer confederate, then write a comprehensive psycho-educational report describing the procedures and results. A sample report will be provided as an exemplar. The report will conclude with a summary, "diagnosis," and recommendations for treatment or follow up. This activity is worth 25% of the final grade. The grade for this project will reflect the comprehensiveness of the report, application, and integration of information and clarity of professional writing style. An electronic copy of completed report in MSWord MUST be e-mailed to me no later than the beginning of class #15

4. Test Review (25%)

Each student will choose a test and conduct a review of the literature and critical analysis to determine the test's psychometric properties, strengths and weaknesses. The strengths and weaknesses sections must be a minimum of three combined pages of text. A sample review is provided. The purpose of this project is to focus and integrate the concepts covered in class. This activity is worth 25% of the final grade. The grade for this project will reflect the comprehensiveness of the review, application, and integration of information and clarity of professional writing style. One-half of this grade will reflect quality and presentation of content. The remaining one-half reflects adherence to APA style and writing skill. Citations and references must adhere to APA style. An outline of essential information to be included and a sample review is included below. The review also serves as a key assessment for CACREP evaluation purposes and the scoring rubric is provided below. The final review is due at the beginning of Class #14. An electronic copy of completed papers in MSWord MUST be e-mailed to me no later than the beginning of the class it is due.

Test Review Project Outline

Title:

Acronym:

Author(s):

Publication Date:

Publisher:

Price:

Computer Scoring Software Available:

GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary Constructs Assessed:

Test Purpose:

Administration Type:

Population/Range:

Time Required to Administer, Score and Interpret:

Interpretive Scores Derived:

Subtest (Subscale) Format:

Item/Scoring Format:

Qualifications of Examiners:

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND SCORING PROCEDURES

NORMATIVE INFORMATION

Type of Norms:

Age/Grade of Participants:

Sex of Participants:

Dates of Standardization:

Number of Participants in Sample:

Sample Characteristics:

Geographic Composition:

Racial Composition:

Socioeconomic Composition:

Availability of Subgroup Norms:

RELIABILITY

Internal Consistency:

Test-Retest:

Alternate-Form:

Scorer Reliability:

VALIDITY

Content Validity:

Criterion-related Validity

Construct Validity:

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

References

COURSE GRADING

Participation	Required
Midterm Exam	25%
Report	25%
Test Review	25%
Final Exam	25%

Final grades will be assigned based on the percentage of points earned:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	80-86
C+	77-79
C	70-76
D	60-69
F	0-59

Test Review Project Evaluation Rubric

Rating Scale

4=Mastery: Strong mastery of skills and thorough understanding of concepts significantly beyond developmental level

3=Proficient: Understanding of concepts/skills evident

2=Emergent: Minor conceptual and skill errors; in process of developing

1=Non-existent: Significant remediation needed; deficits in knowledge/skills

NA=Not Applicable: Unable to measure with given data (do not use to indicate deficit)

	4	3	2	1	Standard	Score
Application of Selection, Administration, Scoring and Interpretation	Considers all major and subtle issues related to ethical and culturally relevant instrument selection, administration, scoring, and interpretation.	Considers major issues related to ethical and culturally relevant instrument selection, administration, scoring, and interpretation.	Vague description or minor problems in handling issues related to ethical and culturally relevant instrument selection, administration, scoring, and interpretation.	Misses one or more significant issue related to ethical and culturally relevant instrument selection, administration, scoring, and interpretation.	2.F.7.m	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NA
Analysis of Score Reliability & Validity	Exceptional understanding of reliability and validity, able to identify subtle issues related to clinical application; uses literature to support.	Clear understanding of reliability and validity; able to identify major issues related to clinical application.	Minor problems in understanding of reliability and validity or other problems with instrument; does not identify issues related to clinical application.	Significant problems in understanding of reliability and validity or other problems with instrument; unable to identify issues related to clinical application.	2.F.8.f	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NA
Analysis of Standardization and Norms	Exceptional mastery of methods of standardization and norm- or criterion referencing. Sophisticated explanation of potential logistical issues.	Clear explanation of standardization and norm- or criterion-referencing. Feasible; accounts for most major potential logistical problems.	Minor problems with explaining methods of standardization and norm- or criterion-referencing. Vague or does not account for likely logistical problems.	Significant problems explaining standardization and norm- or criterion-referencing; Vague or not very feasible.	2.F.7.g-h	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NA
Identification and Critique of Existing Research	Insightful and subtle critique of existing research; able to subtly assess strengths and weaknesses; sophisticated organization and flow of review; concise yet detailed. Exceptional writing ability; professional voice.	Good overview of literature with clear critique of research; able to assess strengths and weaknesses; sufficient organization. Clearly written using professional style.	Minor problems with review and/or critique of literature; may have missed significant topics or studies; writing may lack clarity or professional style.	Significant problems with review and critique of literature. Significant literature not included and/or inaccurately critiqued. Writing ability or style may detract significantly.	2.F.8.a	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NA
APA Format	Consistently adheres to APA format, including cover sheet, running head, headings, in-text citations, paragraph format, references, etc.	No more than a few minor APA errors; overall, follows general format.	Numerous APA errors that are distracting; numerous inconsistencies.	Significant problem following APA style; numerous problems in several areas.	2.F.8.j	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NA
Quality of Writing	Sophisticated writing style, clear, concise, smooth; maintains professional voice; pleasure to read; developed effective writing style; virtually no grammatical errors.	Clear, concise writing style; maintains professional voice; minor and few grammatical errors.	Minor problems with writing style and/or grammar; vague or wordy; does not maintain professional voice.	Significant problems with writing; ideas not clearly communicated due to writing ability; numerous grammatical errors.	2.F.8.j G.3.n	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NA

Honor Code

Vanderbilt University places a high priority on and strives to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity while protecting the rights of students and faculty. Should the instructor find evidence of cheating, plagiarism, other inappropriate assistance in work presented by a student, or any other violation of the honor code, the student will receive no points on the assignment/exam, and will be referred to the Honor Council for further disciplinary action.

Honor code violations include:

1. **Falsifying or cheating** on a report, paper, exercise, problem, test or examination, tape, film, or computer program submitted by a student to meet course requirements. Cheating includes the use of unauthorized aids (e.g., crib sheets, discarded computer programs, the aid of another person on a take-home exam); copying from another student's work; soliciting, giving, and/or receiving unauthorized aid orally or in writing; or similar action contrary to the principles of academic honesty.
2. **Plagiarism** on an assigned paper, theme, report, or other material submitted to meet course requirements. Plagiarism is defined as incorporating into one's own work the work of another without properly indicating that source. A description of plagiarism related to papers is given below.
3. **Failure to report** a known or suspected violation of the Code in the manner prescribed.
4. **Any action designed to deceive** a member of the faculty, a staff member, or a fellow student regarding principles contained in the Honor Code, such as securing an answer to a problem for one course from a faculty member in another course when such assistance has not been authorized.
5. **Submission of work prepared for another course** without specific prior authorization of the instructors in both courses.
6. **Use of texts or papers prepared by commercial or noncommercial agents** and submitted as a student's own work.
7. **Falsification of results** of a study or research.

The Honor Code Applied to Preparation of Papers

- Papers are to express the original thoughts of the student. If a topic for a paper has been discussed fully among students prior to an assignment, then the students should consult the instructor about writing on that particular topic.
- Failure to indicate the source of ideas, expressions, phrases, or sentences constitutes plagiarism.
- A student may not submit papers substantially the same in content for credit in more than one course, without specific and prior permission of all instructors concerned.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topics	Standards	Before the Session Begins
1		Introductions; Attendance, Review syllabus; Introduction to Measurement and History	2.F.7.a,f	Chapters 1-2;
2		Mock Interview Relay Event with Dr. Smith; Practice assessments		
3		Testing conditions & administration considerations; Preparing for assessment and assessment meetings; Scaling; Ethical Guidelines	2.F.7.b,m	Chapter 3-5; ACA Code (Section E)
4		*Notification of Project Status Due Today* Statistical concepts; Norms and the interpretation of test scores	2.F.7.g	
5		The Interpretation of Tests (continued)	2.F.7.g	
6		Standardization; Criterion-referenced assessment; Review for Midterm Exam	2.F.7.f,m	Chapter from <i>Mastering...</i>
7		*MIDTERM EXAM* ; Assessment Practice		
8		Correlation coefficient; Reliability	2.F.7.g-h	Chapter 6
9		Validity; Using tests to help make decisions	2.F.7.h,l	Chapter 7
10		Using tests to help make decisions; Item analysis; Shapes of distributions	2.F.7.g,l	
11		Writing workshop; Testing culturally diverse and special needs subpopulations; Clinical assessment case conceptualization and diagnosis	2.F.7.d-e,g, i-k, 5.G.1.e, 2.g	APA style guide; Chapter 8-9
12		Final exam review; Demonstration of commonly used tests PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL REPORT DUE	2.F.7.d-e,g,i-k, 5.G.1.e, 2.g	Chapters 10-11; Chapter from <i>Mastering...</i>
13		**FINAL EXAM** ; Assessment Practice		Chapter 12-13
14		***TEST REVIEW PROJECT DUE*** Demonstration of commonly used tests; Aggression, suicide, and self-harm; Environmental and behavioral assessment Demonstrations; Wrap-up	2.F.7.c-e,g,i-k, 5.G.1.e,2.g	Chapter 14-15
		Thanksgiving Holiday – NO CLASS		