

PSYCHOLOGY 350—Clinical and Research Assessment

Psychology Department

Spring 2019

Section 1; 3 Units

Location: Rohr Hall, room 112
Day/Time: Wednesdays, 1:30pm-4:00pm
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Office hours: email to set up an appointment

I. PLNU Mission Statement

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan Heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is perused, and holiness is a way of life.

II. Course Description, Purpose, and Objective

1. What is *Psychological Testing*? Many of you may feel that you know exactly what psychological testing is because you have taken tests in other psychology courses. However, psychology has evolved to the point where measurement of personality, intelligence, and other traits has become a serious science. This course will attempt to illustrate both the scientific basis of test development as well as the clinical, gut level talent involved in interpretation. The student will be exposed to various testing procedures, including behavioral checklists, objective measures, intelligence measures, as well as individual and relational inventories.
2. As described in the college general catalog, this course will provide: *A detailed study of selected psychological assessment instruments used in clinical and research settings. Emphasis is placed on reliability and validity, as well as selection of tests for diagnosis, treatment planning, and research.*
3. Therapists and researchers who use psychological tests today must do so with superb understanding and skill. It is necessary to know and understand the professional literature related to the use of these tests. The justification of their use must rest on the solid bedrock of empirical and statistical findings. If the scientific bedrock is really there, it does little good unless it is understood by those administering the tests. Test results can be adequately translated into layman terminology only if the science of how they were derived is understood. And, the results of psychological testing become useless without adequate translation into practical language.
4. Understanding of the history, principles, and applications of psychological testing will justify their use, but it still remains necessary to justify the practitioner who uses them. The tests themselves do not classify. It is the individual clinician who must do so. Our objective will be to introduce you to this art/science and set appropriate boundaries for your level of training. Most

psychological tests introduced to the student will be with the understanding that mastery comes only with further graduate training.

III. Course Design

A combination of class lectures, demonstrations, discussions, and clinical case studies will be used. The purpose of the lectures will be to highlight selected topics from the required readings and to supplement the material with related issues. Students are responsible for all assigned readings whether or not discussed in class.

The course is designed to expose students to some of the more commonly used psychological instruments in clinical and research settings. Emphasis will be placed on the integration of testing data and its utility in diagnosis and treatment planning. Students will be exposed to the ways in which psychologists think about utilizing testing.

IV. Course Learning Outcomes: *Students will be able to...*

1. Describe instruments that may be used in the following domains: behavioral checklists, objective measure, intelligence measures, individual, and relational measures.
2. Summarize the scientific basis of test development, including reliability and validity.
3. Identify, at the basic level, an inventory to be used for diagnosis.
4. Design a basic-level treatment plan for a client.
5. Understand how psychodiagnostic measures can be used to aide in diagnosing psychopathology.
6. Conduct a psychosocial (a.k.a. clinical interview) in which you gather information about a person's past history to aide in diagnosis according to the DSM-IV-TR and DSM 5.

V. Required Text & Reader

1. **TEXT:** Neukrug, Edward S. & Fawcett, R. Charles. (2015). *Essentials of Testing and Assessment: A Practical Guide for Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists*. Belmont, California: Brooks/Cole. 3rd edition.
2. **READER:** Reynolds, C. R. & Livingston, R. B. (2012). *Mastering Modern Psychological Testing: Theory & Methods*.
 - Chapter 13—Neuropsychological Testing
 - Chapter 14—Forensic Applications of Psychological Assessment

VI. Course Rules

- a. Due to the nature of this class, you will be asked to share personal information through assessment data as part of practicing and learning various psychodiagnostic measures. However, you are never required to share anything that you do not feel comfortable sharing, either in papers or in class. This is intended to be a safe place.
- b. You will be sharing information about friends, colleagues, family members as part of your oral presentation and your two assessment papers. It is important that you do not share any information outside of this classroom, and that you respect privacy and confidentiality from class. It should be noted, that for assessment cases, no actual names will be used; however, privacy and confidentiality are still expected to be maintained by all students in this course.
- c. Professor and students alike must respect and honor one another.
- d. This course will rely mostly on lectures, projects, case presentations, and discussions. Lectures are intended to integrate and supplement the readings. Therefore, students are expected to

complete readings prior to each class meeting. However, the success of the class will greatly rely on student participation in class discussion and exercises.

VII. Evaluation and Assignments

- a. **Examinations:** There will be three exams; one will be the final exam. Each exam will be worth 100 points. All examinations will cover text, lecture, and other material presented in class. The format of the examination will consist of multiple-choice questions and short answer responses.
- b. **Clinical Interview:** A major part of this course will be learning how to diagnosis and how to gather information about a person's history. You will practice conducting a clinical interview and turn in your clinical interview for instructor feedback. It is important to master this skill, as your assessment reports will build off of this assignment. This assignment is worth 5 pts.
- c. **MMPI-2:** You will complete an MMPI-2 in the psychology department's office. The assessment will be scored in class. This assignment is worth 25 pts, and will also be used for your personal assessment paper.
- d. **Personal Assessment Paper:** As part of the psychological testing course requirements, each student will be required to write a four to five-page psychological assessment after taking several tests in this course (DAP, MMPI-2, Sentence Completion, etc.) No references are needed. This assignment will be discussed further in class. You will be graded based on: professional presentation, following the recommended format, integration of psychological assessment results, level of insight, grammar and spelling, and length. This assignment is worth 100 points.
- e. **Clinical Assessment Report:** Conduct a psychological evaluation and report on one volunteer. Papers must be four to five pages in length. Paper requirements and examples will be provided and discussed in class. You will be graded based on: professional presentation, following the recommended format, integration of psychological assessment results, level of insight, grammar and spelling, and length. This assignment is worth 100 points.
- f. **Case Study Presentation:** Choose a different volunteer than the one you chose for your clinical assessment report to participate in the psychological evaluation process. You will be presenting this second case in class rather than writing a report on them. The presentation will be in a case study format (format will be provided in class), and will require you to bring the assessment data to class to share with your classmates. Presentations are worth 50 pts and your test administration documents will be turned in for an additional 50pts. (**NOTE:** you will need a total of TWO volunteers-ONE volunteer will be the subject for your Clinical Assessment Report, and ONE volunteer will be the subject for your Case Study Presentation.) You will sign up for a presentation date in class.
- g. **Group Diagnostic Project:** You will work with a group of students on reviewing assessment data results and practice diagnosing according to the DSM-IV-TR and DSM 5.

VIII. Grading: Your final course grade will be composed of the following:

POINTS FOR PSY350	
Personal Assessment Report	100 pts
Clinical Interview	5pts
MMPI-2	25pts
Assessment Report	100 pts
Exam 1	100 pts
Exam 2	100 pts
Final Exam	100 pts
Case Study Presentation	100pts
Group Diagnostic Project	50pts
TOTAL POINTS	650pts

Grading Scale				
	A	93 to 100%	A-	90 to 92.99%
B+		88 to 89.99%	B	84 to 87.99%
	B-			80 to 83.99%
C+		78 to 79.99%	C	74 to 77.99%
	C-			70 to 73.99%
D+		66 to 69.99%	D	60 to 65.99%
	D-			50 to 59.99%
	F	0 to 49.99%		

IX. Attendance

- a. The faculty members strongly believe that you should be exposed to all elements of PSY 350. Students are expected to participate in class discussions. In the event a student’s final grade is borderline, classroom participation will be considered in assigning a final grade. Grades will be based on departmental standards for upper division courses. *The professor reserves the right to adjust the scale if needed.*
- b. The only excused absence occurs when you miss class due to a college-sponsored activity (approved in writing by the Academic Dean). Excused absences for serious illness (hospitalization) and other calamities are up to the discretion of the section professor. *If you miss that which is the equivalent of one and one-half weeks of classes, you may be de-enrolled from this course according to catalog policy.*
- c. Students not present for a test will receive 0 points on the missed test. *If a student cannot take a test due to extreme circumstances beyond their control, the professor needs to be notified prior to the examination.* If the professor is unavailable, you need to email or voicemail the professor prior to the examination.

X. Policy on Electronic Devices

A student’s classroom contribution is vital to the academic environment at Point Loma. Classroom contribution is more than just asking thoughtful questions; it also involves respectful attention to what others are saying. This is not only good because what is being said might be on a test, but it is also just a common courtesy. Although it does not need to be said to most college students, texting or listening to one’s IPod detracts from the classroom environment. We doubt that this will be a problem, but first-time violation of the policy will result in a 1% reduction in a student’s overall PSY 350 grade, and each subsequent violation will result in a 3% reduction in a student’s

overall PSY 350 grade. You may use your Laptop in this class to take notes; however, you are not allowed to be on the Internet unless instructed by the professor.

XI. Academic Honesty

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. As explained in the university catalog, academic dishonesty is that act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as ones' own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. Violations of university academic honesty include cheating, plagiarism, falsification, aiding in the dishonesty of others, or malicious misuse of university resources. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for (a) a particular assignment or examination, and/or (b) the course following the procedure in the university catalog. Students may appeal also using the procedure in the university catalog. See Academic Policies for further information.

XII. Students with Disabilities and PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

All students are expected to meet the standards for this course as set by the instructor. However, students with learning disabilities who may need accommodations should discuss options with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) located in the Bond Academic Center, during the first two weeks of class. The DRC will contact professors with suggestions related to classroom needs and accommodations. Approved documentation must be on file in the DRC prior to the start of the semester. You may contact DRC by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

XIII. PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

XIV. Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. **The final examination is scheduled for WEDNESDAY, MAY 1st from 130pm-4pm.** No requests for early examinations or alternate days will be approved.

CLASS SCHEDULE & READINGS

Unit	Class #	Date	Readings (prior to class)	Assignments Due
Unit 1-- Understanding the Assessment Process	1	1/9	Syllabus (read in class) & Neukrug Chapter 1— History of Assessment	
	2	1/16	Neukrug Chapter 2— Ethical, legal, & Professional Issues	<i>Bring Magazines to class</i>
	3	1/23	Neukrug Chapter 4— Assessment Report Process	<i>Clinical Interview Due (completed in class)</i>
	4	1/30	Neukrug pp. 249-252 (MMPI) & Review for test 1	<i>Bring completed MMPI-2 to class (we will score in class)</i>
	5	2/6	EXAM 1	<i>Bring a #2 pencil & Take the NEO & Myers Briggs</i>
Unit 2— Diagnosing and Test Worthiness	6	2/13	Neukrug Chapter 3-- Diagnosing	<i>Work on Group Diagnostic Project in Class</i>
	7	2/20	Neukrug Chapter 5— Test Worthiness & Neukrug Chapter 6— Statistical Concepts	<i>Group Diagnostic Project Due</i>
	8	2/27	Neukrug Chapter 7— Statistical Concepts &	<i>Personal Assessment Paper Due</i>
	9	3/13	EXAM 2 IQ Kit Day	<i>Bring a #2 pencil</i>
Unit 3— Commonly Used Assessment Techniques	10	3/20	Neukrug Chapter 9— Intelligence Reynolds & Livingston— Neuropsychological Testing Neukrug Chapter 8— Assessment of Educational Ability	
	11	3/27	Neukrug Chapter 10— Vocational Tests	<i>Presentations Start</i>
	12	4/3	Neukrug Chapter 11— Clinical Assessment And Child & Adolescent Assessment (no reading)	

	13	4/10	Neukrug Chapter 12— Informal Assessment Reynolds & Livingston— Forensic Testing	
	14	4/17		<i>Clinical Assessment Paper Due</i>
	15	4/24	Catch up Day & Review for Final Exam	
	16	5/1	Final Exam (1:30pm-4pm)	

- The Instructor reserves the right to modify the course schedule/syllabus as needed to maximize student learning needs.
- Note: The Final Exam is on **WEDNESDAY** of Finals week.