

# COUN 517: Assessment in Counseling Summer 2, 2012 Syllabus

## Instructor Contact Information

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## **Summer 2012 Office Hours      Communicating with the Instructor**

*Any meetings will be "virtual." Physically, I will not be in the office during Summer 2, 2012 (I will be teaching from Virginia). However I plan to be available "virtually" most evenings (M-Th) via the eCollege classroom.*

- \* Email is preferred means of communication
- \* Emails received in the evening or on weekends will be answered the following day (M-Th)
- \* Telephone calls are O.K. I will return calls if I understand the message and phone number.

## **Course Descriptions**

### Catalog

517. *Assessment in Counseling*. Three semester hours. Includes group and individual appraisal techniques to be used to support career, educational, and personal planning and development. Standardized and non-standardized data information gathering methods, validity, reliability, psychometric statistics, factors influencing appraisals, and use and interpretation of appraisal results with a variety of populations are explored.

### General

As a core requirement in all master's-level programs in the department, this course provides students who work in a variety of settings with information regarding the proper selection and use of standardized and non-standardized assessment instruments and the integration of the assessment and counseling process. In addition, related professional issues such as the history of assessment, legal and ethical concerns related to assessment, and trends in the field will be included.

## **For Students Needing Special Accommodations**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Gee Library 132**  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**  
**Fax (903) 468-8148**  
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

## **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)  
*Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedure A12.08.11*

## **Academic Honesty**

Graduate students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work. (See Section A13.12, Academic Honesty, A&M-Commerce Procedures.)

## Course Objectives

Objectives for COUN 517 are derived from the general objectives provided by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) for program content related to assessment.

### A. *historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment;*

*Students will be able to:*

- A1 Identify the meaning of and/or define “assessment”
- A2 Categorize examples of the use of assessment for the purposes of (a) placement/selection, (b) prediction, (c) description/diagnosis, and (d) systematic information.
- A3 List and/or identify the correct source(s) of specific information about an assessment instrument.
- A4 Differentiate correct and incorrect statements regarding important historical and current perspectives related to assessment in counseling.

### B. *gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, disability, culture, spirituality, and other factors related to the assessment and evaluation of individuals, groups, and specific populations;*

*Students will be able to:*

- B1 List and/or identify examples of bias in assessment
- B2 Discuss and/or identify the effects of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, culture, spirituality, time perspective, motivation, language, examiner bias, etc. on assessment in a diverse society.
- B3 Evaluate claims made for “culture free” and “culture fair” assessments.

### C. *ethical and legal considerations;*

*Students will be able to:*

- C1 Discuss and/or identify ethical practices related to assessment as identified in Section E of the ACA Code of Ethics.
- C2 Explain and/or identify appropriate legal standards related to assessment (court cases, Texas law, FERPA, PL 94-142, IDEA, HIPAA, ADA)

### D. *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;*

*Students will be able to:*

- D1 Contrast norm-referenced, criterion-reference, and ipsative assessment with regard to definitions and applications.
- D2 Identify and/or generate correct statements regarding the use of stratified random sampling to establish norm groups.
- D3 Discuss and/or identify advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires and behavioral observations as sources of assessment information.
- D4 Generate and/or identify correct statements related to non-standardized techniques of recording behavioral observations such as anecdotal records, rating scales, check lists, Q-sorts, and semantic differentials
- D5 Identify and/or explain the roles of non-structured and structured interviews in assessment.
- D6 Generate and/or identify correct statements regarding authentic (performance) assessment.
- D7 Identify and/or generate correct statements regarding environmental assessment.
- D8 Identify and/or discuss advantages and limitations of computer applications in assessment.

### E. *statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations;*

*Students will be able to:*

- E1 Categorize or generate examples of measurement as nominal, ordinal, interval, or ratio.
- E2 Compute the following for given values of X and Y:  $\Sigma X$   $\Sigma(X+Y)^2$   $\Sigma X^2$   $(\Sigma X)^2$   $\Sigma XY$
- E3 Compute and/or identify correct applications of the following measures of central tendency: mean, median, mode.
- E4 Explain and/or apply the following measures of variability (dispersion): range, inter-quartile range, variance, and standard deviation.
- E5 Compare and contrast histograms and frequency polygons
- E6 Identify and/or discuss characteristics of normal curves and non-normal curves (for example positive and negative skew, bimodal, and rectangular)
- E7 Generate and/or identify correct interpretations of correlation and related scatter diagrams.

**F. reliability (i.e., theory of measurement error, models of reliability, and the use of reliability information)**

Students will be able to:

- F1 Identify and/or apply various types of reliability estimates related to stability, equivalence, and internal consistency.
- F2 Identify and/or discuss the relationship between standard error of measurement and reliability coefficient.
- F3 Identify a correct interpretation or interpret correctly a standard error of measurement

**G. validity (i.e., evidence of validity, types of validity, and the relationship between reliability and validity;**

Students will be able to:

- G1 Define and/or apply various types of validity and evaluate their use with different types of instruments.
- G2 Calculate a predicted value of a score based upon a given value of another score (predicted value of  $Y$  based upon given value of  $X$ )
- G3 Calculate and interpret one standard error of an *estimate* around a predicted score.
- G4 Explain and/or identify the relationship between reliability and validity.

**H. strategies for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in counseling**

Students will be able to:

- H1 Apply and/or identify criteria for selection, administration, scoring, and interpretation of assessment tools.
- H2 Define and contrast obtained score, true score, and raw score.
- H3 Define and/or apply age equivalents, grade equivalents, and Texas Learning Index (TLI), percentile, decile, and quartile scores.
- H4 Compute a z-score for an obtained score.
- H5 Given the appropriate derivation formula (e.g.,  $Z = 10z + 50$ ), compute derived standard scores (e.g.,  $Z$ , WISC, etc.) from standard z scores. Also, given the appropriate formula, identify the mean and standard deviation of the derived score distribution.
- H6 Generate and/or identify correct statements regarding *normalized* scores and specific examples such as T-scores, stanines, and NCEs.

**I. an understanding of general principles and methods of case conceptualization, assessment, and/or diagnoses of mental and emotional status**

Students will be able to:

- I1 Explain and/or identify the purposes and characteristics of various categories of standardized instruments (e.g., achievement, intelligence, interest, personality, etc.) in educational and/or non-educational settings.
- I2 Identify and/or generate statements which correctly describe popular standardized instruments
- I3 Compare and contrast the following types of achievement tests: survey batteries, single subject, diagnostic, and prognostic.
- I4 Describe and/or identify a correct description of *response set* and discuss and/or identify methods used to reduce the response set effect.
- I5 Define and/or identify a definition of *projective* personality assessments and evaluate, generate, and/or identify correct statements regarding the use of such instruments under given circumstances.
- I6 List and/or identify types of instruments and techniques used to gather data and report results in clinical assessment of adjustment
- I7 Discuss and/or identify the role of assessment in case conceptualization, the purpose of case conceptualization, and the scope and reason for case studies.
- I8 Evaluate a published assessment instrument.

## Course Outline

- Meaning and purposes of assessment
- Sources of information about assessment instruments
- History of assessment
  - Ancient history
  - 20<sup>th</sup> Century
  - Current perspectives
- Assessment with Diverse Populations
- Ethical and legal considerations in assessment
- Non-standardized assessment techniques
- Basic statistical concepts
- The assessment process
- Technical Qualities of Measures

- Reliability
- Validity
- Norm Groups – Reference Samples
- Types and interpretation of scores
- Measures for specific purposes
  - Intelligence and scholastic ability tests
  - Aptitude tests
  - Achievement tests
  - Career and employment assessment
  - Personality assessment
  - Clinical Assessment

## TEExES Competencies for School Counselors that relate to this course

- *Competency 002 (Student Diversity)*
  - The school counselor understands human diversity and applies this knowledge to ensure that the developmental guidance and counseling program is responsive to all students.
- *Competency 003 (Factors affecting Students)*
  - The school counselor understands factors that may affect students’ development and school achievement and applies this knowledge to promote students’ ability to achieve their potential.
- *Competency 007 (Assessment)*
  - The school counselor understands principles of assessment and is able to use assessment results to identify students’ strengths and needs, monitor progress, and engage in planning to promote school success.
- *Competency 010 (Professionalism)*
  - The school counselor understands and complies with ethical, legal, and professional standards relevant to the profession.

## Grading

<b>A</b>	≥ 90	Defined as consistently excellent performance which distinguishes the individual as being hard-working and highly motivated to succeed.
<b>B</b>	80 - 89	Defined as above average performance, occasionally submitting work of superior quality distinguishing the individual as being of high caliber.
<b>C</b>	70 - 79	Defined as average performance with little or no distinction.
<b>D</b>	60 -69	Defined as below average performance, but acceptable (according to university standards) in order to receive a passing grade.
<b>F</b>	< 60	Defined as unacceptable performance in relation to standards.

## Course Requirements

**Prerequisites** Students are expected to be able to: 1) Navigate the World Wide Web using a web browser (e.g., Netscape, Explorer, Opera, Firefox) and a search engine (e.g., HotBot, Lycos, Google); 2) Communicate electronically via email; 3) Send attachments via email; and, 4) Use a word processing computer program (e.g., MS Word, MS Works, WordPerfect)

**Tests** Five (5) tests will be completed during the term. Test items will be drawn from lectures, text, and assigned readings. You should know that I earned an “A” in a course in test construction in one of my degree programs. In it, I learned to construct multiple choice items that address all levels of Bloom’s taxonomy. Thus, you will often encounter items for which responses are not readily found directly in the text or lessons. Instead, discerning the correct response will require you to have an in-depth understanding of the concepts upon which the item is based. There is no set schedule for completing tests. All tests must be completed by noon , Friday, 08/10. Final grade value: 40%

For those who prefer a set schedule, but may find it somewhat challenging to self-motivate, I offer the following RECOMMENDED test completion schedule:

Test 1 – 07/12  
 Test 2 – 07/19  
 Test 3 – 07/26  
 Test 4 – 08/02  
 Test 5 – 08/09

**Assignments** *Discussions* – Students are expected to participate in 8 biweekly discussions hosted asynchronously in ECollege. Bi-weekly, I will post a discussion prompt by midnight on Sunday. You are expected to respond to that prompt by 11:59 p.m. on the following Tuesday and to respond to at least 3 classmates' contributions by 11:59 p.m. the following Thursday (Week 1 – Wednesday and Friday). 20 possible points can be earned for each biweekly discussion, distributed as follows: Your initial contribution – 10 points; first response to a classmate's contribution – 5 points; second response to another classmate's contribution – 3 points; third response to another classmate's contribution – 2 points; having the last word – PRICELESS! Final grade value: 20%.

Discussion Schedule

Discussion Item	Prompt posted	Initial contribution due	Responses to others due
Week 1	07/08	07/11	07/13
Week 2	07/15	07/17	07/19
Week 3	07/22	07/24	07/26
Week 4	07/29	07/31	08/02
Week 5	08/05	08/07	08/09

*Assessment instrument completion and reaction*

I have identified 2 assessments available at no charge for on-line completion or for downloading, printing, and written completion. You are to complete these then submit a 1-2 page reaction for each in which you discuss your expectations regarding the assessment, the complexity/simplicity of the items, the perceived relevance of the measure, your anticipated results versus your actual results, etc. A Drop Box will be designated to which you will submit each review. Here are the links for this assignment:

Interest Profiler and the Work Importance Locator combined

<http://www.texascaresonline.com> (Choose "World of Work," then "Self Assessment")

IP/WIL review is due by 11:59 p.m., Monday, 7/23

Keirsey Temperament Sorter

<http://www.keirsey.com/sorter/register.aspx>

Keirsey review is due by 11:59 p.m., Friday 8/3

Final grade value: 20%

*Journal Article Review*

You will review 1 assessment-related journal article. You must select 1 assessment-related journal article that appears in a professional journal. Articles from "popular press" magazines (e.g., Psychology Today, Cosmopolitan, Reader's Digest) are not acceptable. Neither are short, abridged articles such as those in Psych Abstracts. Your review will include a 2-3 paragraph summary of the literature review in the article, a 1-2 paragraph summary of the methods (if research-based article) or a 1-2 paragraph summary of the authors' model, theory, ideas, etc. Finally, conclude your review with a paragraph in which you detail your thoughts regarding what you have read. Articles must be selected and submitted for approval by Tuesday, 7/17 at 11:59 p.m. Articles to be reviewed must be finalized by Tuesday, 7/24 at 11:59 p.m.. Article reviews are due by Monday, 8/6 at 11:59 p.m. Final grade value: 20%

**Notes**

*Timely Participation*

Within certain parameters, this class is self-paced. Granted, there are due dates for discussions and assignments, but "wiggle room" exists within those submission requirements. Thus, you are expected to adhere to those deadlines. Should you need extra time to complete and submit an *Assessment Instrument Reaction* and/or a *Journal Article Re-*

view, you may “purchase” an additional 2 days with 10% of the possible grade for that particular assignment. For example, Harry is unable to complete and submit his *Assessment Instrument Reaction* on time. He elects to submit it 2 days after it is due. The maximum grade Harry can receive is 90%. You may NOT purchase additional time to complete tests. You have the entire semester to complete 5 tests. Grades are due to the registrar soon after the class ends.

## Course Materials

### Texts

The texts listed below are the required text for COUN 517. I will prepare my comments primarily from other sources.

You may be asking, "Why have us buy one text then prepare course material from another?" My perspective is this: You can read the Whitson text so I should provide information gleaned from other perspectives.

### Required:

Whitson, S. C. (2013). *Principles and applications of assessment in counseling* (4th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning.

Silverlake, A. C. (1999). *Comprehending test manuals: A guide and workbook*. Glendale, CA: Pyczak Publishing.

### Selected Bibliography

Anastasi, A., & Urbina, S. (1997). *Psychological testing* (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill-Prentice Hall.

Kapes, J. T., Mastie, M. M., & Whitfield, E. A. (1994). *A counselor's guide to career assessment instruments* (3rd Ed.). Alexandria, VA: National Career Development Association.

Murphy, L.L., Plake, B.S., Impara, J.C., & Spies, R.A. (Eds.). (2002). *Tests In Print VI*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Neukrug, E. S. & Fawcett, R. C. (2006). *Essentials of testing and assessment: A practical guide for counselors, social workers, and psychologists*. United States: Thompson Brooks/Cole.

Prediger, D. (Ed.). (1993). *Multicultural assessment standards: A compilation for counselors*. The Association for Assessment in Counseling: Alexandria, VA.

Super, D. E. (1991). *Career-development, assessment and counseling: The C-DAC model*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Spies, R.A. & Plake, B. S. (Eds.). (2005). *The sixteenth mental measurement yearbook*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Zunker, V. G., & Norris, D. S. (1998). *Using assessment results for career development* (5th Ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

### Supplemental Materials

As copyright laws permit, supplemental materials will be made available via the COUN 517 web page. These materials may include, but are not limited to, diagrams, charts, summarizations, tables, and lecture outlines.