

## FLEXIBLE SYLLABUS

### Texas A&M-Commerce College of Education and Human Services Department of Psychology, Counseling & Special education

**Course:** COUN 317 Intro to Assessment

**Class Meeting:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday 3:00-3:50pm; SS 310

**Instructor:** Felicia Ward, MA, LPC-Intern, LCDC-Intern

**Email:** [fward2@leo.tamuc.edu](mailto:fward2@leo.tamuc.edu)  
(Be sure to include "COUN 317" in the subject line)

**Office Hours:** by appointment

#### **Required Texts:**

Hays, D., Wheeler, A. & Bertram, B. (2014). *Assessment in Counseling: A guide to the use of Psychological Assessment Procedures* (5th Ed.). Wiley. ISBN- 9781556203183

#### **Suggested Text:**

American Psychological Association, (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5<sup>th</sup> ed). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.

#### **Course Description**

The intent is to make this course informative, challenging, and worthwhile. A variety of learning activities have been structured to provide you with opportunities which will encourage your growth as a counselor. The degree to which you perceive this experience as enhancing to your personal and professional growth will largely be a function of your own goals for this experience and the responsibility and initiative you assume in achieving those goals.

#### **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, students should have:

- Knowledge of measurement concepts including historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment, and prior and current research-based assessment trends.
- Knowledge regarding the design and purpose of various instruments including standardized and non-standardized testing and other assessment techniques. These include but are not limited to the study of:
  - objective, projective, and behavioral measures of personality
  - intelligence, aptitude and achievement instruments
  - interests, work values and career development assessments
  - person-environment interaction and human development assessment.
- Ability to apply statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, distributions of scores, and correlations.
- Knowledge in theory of measurement, including measurement error, validity and reliability.

- An understanding of cultural and social factors that influence assessment, such as: age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, disability, culture, spirituality, social status, etc.
- Application of strategies for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in counseling.
- Knowledge regarding the appropriate application of case conceptualization and mental and emotional diagnostic criteria including the DSM V.
- Knowledge about current trends and issues in appraisal including ethical and legal considerations.

### **Participation**

This class depends heavily on discussion, exercise, activities, role-playing to ensure students reach the course objectives. It is essential that students be willing to participate in a free, open, and mutually supportive manner to help one another develop the competencies that are a part of the goals of the course. Students can learn more from each other and from their own thinking/processing than they do strictly from a textbook or the instructor in a course like this. This can only happen if the students are active participants in the course. Participation entails conscientious preparation for class meetings by completing readings and other assignments on schedule. Participation is further demonstrated through comments and expressed opinions that convey your perspective on a topic under discussion. Participation involves a willingness to ask questions in class to make sure you obtain clarification for material that you do not completely understand. You will be appreciated by almost everyone else in the class if you speak up and get clarification for material that is in the least bit confusing to you. All professionals must be committed to their work and to expanding the constantly changing knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are part of a career area. A student's level of involvement in a course like this is a better gauge of his/her level of interest and commitment to a future profession than are traditional exams and term papers. In short, an instructor can tell as much about you, how well you are learning this type of material by involvement in class as by reading the scores on your exams and term papers. Finally, it is impossible to participate if you don't attend class. Attendance is particularly important when practice exercises are taking place with assigned partners. Any absence will affect how you are evaluated in terms of class participation. Make up work will be assigned at the discretion of the Instructor.

### **EXPECTATIONS:**

Students are expected to read all assigned materials and come to class prepared to participate in class discussion/activities. Pop quizzes may be on the agenda if there is not sufficient **class discussion or participation. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!!!**

Students are expected to be respectful to one another during class meetings and class discussions/activities. **I WILL NOT TOLERATE DISRESPECT FOR OR TOWARD FELLOW STUDENTS.** Misbehavior or mistreating of other students may result in a daily grade of 0, dismissal from the classroom and/or other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate to the situation.

*Electronic Devices:* It is disrespectful to myself and fellow students to text, check email, or go online during class time, unless I ask you to look up something specific online.

## Course Assignments & Grades

**1. Attendance:** Active attendance is defined as arriving to class on time, prepared for the day's lesson and remaining for the entire class period. Absences will be excused for those specific reasons stated in the Student's Guidebook (pg. 36-37) with written documentation. Students will be permitted to make up missed activities, tests, etc. within a week for un-foreseen excused absences. For any predetermined absences or unexcused absences (oversleeping, work conflicts, taking care of a sick child, etc.) students must submit assignments on or before the assigned due date to avoid penalty. Every three classes in which the student misses part of the class, but less than 15 minutes of the class, will equate to one absence. Every 3 unexcused absences may result in the drop of a letter grade (10 points) from the student's final grade. Excessive absences prior to midterm, may result in an administrative drop from the course by the instructor.

**2. Daily /Weekly grade:** A weekly grade will be given based on daily attendance, participation, completion of assignments, and professionalism in class. Though attendance is discussed above, participation in class is not possible without attendance and preparedness for class. Professionalism may include aspects such as being respectful of others, taking ownership for your mistakes (not blaming others), discussing issues with students or instructor privately, staying awake during class, keeping comments on topic, leaving phones and other distracting devices put away and so on.

**3. Quizzes:** Some classes may begin or end with a short, daily quiz, over the assigned study topic. Other quizzes may take place through the ecollege portal. Quizzes may not be announced so students should be prepared for them daily.

**4. Exams:** There will be three course examinations covering class materials (from textbook, lecture materials, class discussions, assignments/activities, and student presentations). The exams may consist of true/false, multiple choice, matching, fill in the blank, essay and/or short answer sections. Some questions may closely resemble the quizzes.

**5. Assignment 1:** There are two parts to this assignment, a written portion (A) and a class presentation (B). Students will follow the template for Assignment 1 (see page 6-7) to complete this assignment.

**A. Review of a Testing Instrument** (p. 6). Each student will prepare a written report on a testing instrument along with its applications in case study form. Students will choose an assessment instrument and give a 3-5 page detailed description of the instruments (sign-up list will be provided by instructor).

**B. Presentation:** Students will present their testing instrument to the class from a case study/application perspective. Presentations should be approximately 15 min per student and take the class through the information in the paper portion of the assignment. The testing instrument presentation must be supported by handouts (must include a reference page) and visual aids (power point or poster, charts, pictures...). Creativity is encouraged and may be required for an A on the assignment. Students will also provide three possible quiz/test questions over the presentation that cover the basic knowledge of the instrument and/or its use. Evaluation will be based on information content, student knowledge of the book, relation of the presentation to course material, submitted questions and professionalism/creativity of the presentation (Grading Rubric will be provided).

**7. Assignment 2: My Plan & Career Counseling** (p.8). Each student will be required to complete the My Plan career assessment through the TAMUC career development center and attend a career counseling session to go over the results. Students will be required to attach results of the my plan assessment with a name and signature from a career counselor to their paper for submission. This paper will review your experience taking the My Plan and attending career counseling, your thoughts of the results and the applicability and short falls of this process for assisting clients in career counseling.

*Student Evaluation/Grades:* Student grades will be based on the instructor's assessment in the following areas:

- Daily/Weekly grade 120 points (20%)
- Quizzes 60 points (10%)
- Instrument review 60 points (10%)
- Instrument presentation 60 points (10%)
- Career Counseling 60 points (10%)
- (3) Exams (80 points each) 240 points (13.3% each; 40% total)

600 - 540 A

539 - 480 B

479 - 420 C

419- 360 D

Below 360 F

### **Tentative Schedule**

Week 1 Introductions; Overview of Syllabus; Student/Instructor Expectations

Ch. 1 Assessment in Counseling

Week 2 Ch. 2 Assessment Process

Ch. 3 Ethical, Legal & Professional Considerations

Week 3 Ch. 4 Multicultural Considerations

Week 4 Ch. 5. Measurement Concepts

#### **Intake Interviews**

Week 5 Ch. 6 Raw Scores

Week 6 **Exam # 1**

Ch. 7 Initial Assessment

Week 7 Ch. 8 Substance Abuse

Ch. 8 Mental Health

Week 8 Ch. 9 Assessment of Intelligence

~~~~~**Spring Break!**~~~~~

Week 9 Ch. 10 Ability Testing

Week 10 Ch. 11 Career & Life-Planing

Week 11 Ch. 12 Measures of Interests and Values

#### **Review and Expansion**

Week 12 **Exam #2**

Ch. 13 Personality Assessment

Week 13 Ch. 14 Assessment of Interpersonal Relationships

Week 14 Ch. 15 Communication of Assessment Results

Week 15 Final Review & course reflection

**Final**

Week 16 Finals Week: Course wrap-up

**Professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus.**

### **Diversity Policy**

You are encouraged to contribute your perspective and insights to class discussions. However, offensive language (swearing) and remarks offensive to others of particular nationalities, ethnic groups, sexual preferences, religious groups, genders, or other ascribed statuses cannot be tolerated. Common courtesy and respect will be extended to all. Students abusive to this policy may be asked to leave the classroom and will lose points. Problems in adhering to this policy may result in being dropped or failing this course.

### **Conduct and Academic Honesty**

A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

"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) "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.)

*Note:* You have been informed that your test may closely resemble your quizzes. Therefore, IF at any time you are permitted to use resources on an exam and ANY type of quiz materials are discovered, it will result in a grade of 0 on that test and your academic dishonesty will be reported to the department.

### **Students with Disabilities:**

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 Room 132**

**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**

**Fax (903) 468-8148**

[StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu)

**University Closing Due to Weather**

Check <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/> regarding class cancellations. Also, KETR radio on 88.9 FM and television channels 4, 5, and 8 (channel 7 for Tyler & Longview Area). Professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus schedule.

## Assignment 1

### Template for Review of Testing Instrument

1. Review of Testing Instrument (3-5 pages)
  - a. General Information
    1. Title of test and author
    2. Original date of publication; newest date of revision
    3. Cost (if easy to find – check website)
  - b. Brief description of purpose and nature of test
    1. Type of test (intelligence, etc)
    2. Purpose of test
    3. Structure of test questions: true/false, open-ended questions, etc.
    4. Complexity of test: short, subtests, etc.
  - c. Administering the Test
    1. Time needed to administer and, if information is available, time to score
    2. Clarity of manual instructions for administrator to use and score (manual may not be available)
2. Scoring procedures: complex, simple, etc.
3. Qualifications needed by administrator to give the test.
  - a. Technical evaluation
    1. Information on norms and standardization sample.
    2. Reliability coefficient (test-retest, parallel-form, split-half, Kuder-Richardson or coefficient alpha) including size and nature of sample.
4. Validity coefficient for test (content, criterion, and construct)
  - a. Critique of instrument in applied situations
    1. Identification of 3-5 research studies in which this instrument was used and a brief summary of effectiveness of test as either a research tool or an evaluation instrument.

Example: Wechsler intelligence tests have been used to identify mental retardation, learning disabilities, and other issues among special needs audience. In a nutshell, did the test do what the author hypothesized that it would do!
5. Brief paragraph summarizing strengths and weaknesses of this test based on reviews that are available through *Mental Measurement Yearbooks*, other books and/or other professional resources (ex: peer reviewed journal articles, government or university websites) on testing. MMY is available at TAMU library.

6. Summarize a case study use of the instrument to convey and promote understanding of it's application.

## **Assignment 2**

### **My Plan and Career Counseling**

#### **My plan instructions:**

[www.myplan.com](http://www.myplan.com)

-click "account" tab

-Under new user click "create free account"

License Cod:

-Submit

TAKE ALL 4 ASSESSMENTS

Print 3<sup>RD</sup> page for each assessment (career match) to attach to the back of your paper

#### **Career Counseling**

Schedule a meeting/counseling session with the career development center to go over you My Plan results. Attend the session to write about your experience in your paper. Be sure to have the counselor write their name and provide a signature on your my plan results to provide verification of your attending the session.

#### **My Plan Career Paper:**

Reflect on your experience of taking the My Plan assessment and attending the career counseling. Write on your perspective of these results and usefulness of the assessment and counseling you received in providing career counseling to clients.

### Writing Assignment Grading Rubric

|                               |                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Grammar &amp; Spelling</b> | <b>0</b>                                                                                                  | <b>≤ 10</b>                                                                                                                         | <b>≤ 20</b>                                                                                                                                          | <b>≤ 30</b>                                                                                                    |
|                               | <b>Poor</b>                                                                                               | <b>Needs Work</b>                                                                                                                   | <b>Good</b>                                                                                                                                          | <b>Excellent</b>                                                                                               |
|                               | Several grammatical errors. Paper is difficult to read, unclear and/or some words are undeterminable.     | Grammatical mistakes decreased the quality of the paper. Spelling errors make for slow reading, but the writing is still clear.     | Great, clear paper. Some grammatical mistakes that did not impact the quality of writing. Some noticeable spelling errors but paper is easy to read. | Clearly written paper. Only minor, unnoticeable mistakes.                                                      |
| <b>APA</b>                    | <b>0</b>                                                                                                  | <b>≤ 10</b>                                                                                                                         | <b>≤ 20</b>                                                                                                                                          | <b>≤ 30</b>                                                                                                    |
|                               | <b>Poor</b>                                                                                               | <b>Attempted</b>                                                                                                                    | <b>Good</b>                                                                                                                                          | <b>Excellent</b>                                                                                               |
|                               | Several formatting mistakes or major formatting mistake(s). Student did not follow APA formatting.        | More than 4 mistakes, or reparative mistakes. Student clearly attempted formatting.                                                 | 3-4 minor formatting mistakes. Paper is clearly APA, but has some formatting errors.                                                                 | 1-2 minor mistakes. Great APA, with only minor or unnoticeable errors.                                         |
| <b>Content</b>                | <b>0</b>                                                                                                  | <b>≤ 10</b>                                                                                                                         | <b>≤ 25</b>                                                                                                                                          | <b>≤ 40</b>                                                                                                    |
|                               | <b>Poor</b>                                                                                               | <b>Attempted</b>                                                                                                                    | <b>Good</b>                                                                                                                                          | <b>Excellent</b>                                                                                               |
|                               | Paper is missing the detail of the assignment. Student does not clearly address the assignment in detail. | Paper is missing part of the assignment as detailed in the syllabus and/or in class. Or, the paper fails to clearly explain points. | Paper follows the writing assignment but does not go in to detail or fails to explain some points.                                                   | Paper clearly follows assignment. Includes detail on all information outlined in the syllabus and/or in class. |

#### Other Point Deductions:

**Grammar and spelling:** Issues with the basics of professional writing (such as jargon or use of slang) may result in an **extra 20 point deduction** (on top of receiving no points for spelling and grammar) for incompetence. This type of writing is not school appropriate and reflects the student is either unprepared for college level work or did not put forth a notable amount of effort in to the writing.

**Citations:** Failure to cite sources and/or references is considered a form of plagiarism. Due to the important of citations, incorrect citations will result in a **5 point deduction each**.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty in which somebody claims another's work to be their own or fails to give the appropriate credit to the originating source. Plagiarism may result in an **irreplaceable 0**.

*Disclaimer: It is not plausible to foresee all possible writing issues, for this reason **other point deductions may occur as the instructor sees fit.***