PSYC 368
PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT
Spring 2012

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Office Hours: Mon. / Wed. 4:30-6:00 & by appointment
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Class Meetings: Monday evenings 7:00-9:50pm (Science 204)

Course Description

The overall purpose of this course is to provide you with an introduction to psychological assessment. This course will cover the methodology of psychological assessment, the assessment of abilities, and the assessment of personality and preferences. PSYC 100 or an equivalent college-level Introductory Psychology and PSYC/SOC 314 or equivalent college-level Statistics courses are prerequisites.

Course Objectives

1. To provide an understanding of the field of psychological testing, including its historical development and related ethical and cultural issues.
2. To provide a framework for critically evaluating assessment instruments, including their strengths and limitations.
3. To provide the necessary background to develop measurement tools that are appropriate for their intended use and that are psychometrically sound.
4. To survey commonly used tests from various areas of psychology, including:
   a. Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-IV (WAIS-4)
   b. Wechsler Memory Scale-IV (WMS-4)
   c. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement-III (WJ-3)
   d. Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-II (MMPI-2)
   e. Selected symptom checklists and rating scales
   f. Selected projective tests including the TAT and Rorschach
5. To become familiar with certain testing instruments through in-class demonstrations.
6. To learn and practice critical thinking, writing, and research skills.

Psychology Department Goals

1. Knowledge Base of Psychology: To demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, interdisciplinary connections, and historical roots of psychology.
2. *Research Methods and Resources of Psychology*: To understand and apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, handling subjects, data analysis and interpretation, as well as use the library, computers, and online resources.

3. *Critical Thinking and Communication Skills*: To develop and use critical and creative thinking skills, including skeptical inquiry, critical reading skills, analysis, synthesis, problem solving, professional writing, oral communication, listening, and collaboration skills.

4. *Application of Psychology*: To understand and apply psychology to diverse individuals and groups, and social, cultural, and organizational issues.

5. *Clarification of Values, Personal Development, and Career Planning*: To facilitate clarification of values, including tolerating ambiguity and acting ethically, showing insight into one’s own behavior and mental processes and applying effective strategies for self management and self improvement, and to develop realistic ideas about how to use psychological knowledge, skills, and values in various occupations, and in graduate and professional school.

**Psychology Department Learning Objectives**

By the time they graduate, students with a Major in Psychology will be able to:

a. Apply psychological theories and concepts to analyze behavior.

b. Analyze research reports on psychological issues.

c. Conduct data analyses and interpret their own and others’ data analyses on psychological issues.

d. Communicate their own or others’ research findings on psychological issues both orally and in writing.

e. Show personal development, including clarifying their personal values, enhancing their self-awareness and understanding of others, and identifying the academic degrees required of professional careers in psychology.

**Readings**


**Class Policies**

**Attendance and Participation**: Class attendance is essential to your success in this course. The expectation is that you will attend all class meetings unless a serious illness or emergency prohibits your attendance. You are responsible for material covered during lectures even if it is not in your reading. Furthermore, class demonstrations, class discussions, and in-class exercises will be an important component of learning in this course. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate for the class you missed. I do not give out copies of my personal lecture notes. One absence and one late arrival may not automatically affect your grade, but you will be penalized after that. **Any type of cell phone use during class time is prohibited.**
Academic Dishonesty: (a.k.a. cheating) Cheating will not be tolerated. Cheating on an exam or plagiarizing a paper will result in a grade of “zero” for that exam/paper and a report will be made to the Dean of Students. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, consult the Whittier College Catalog or see me. All of the assignments you turn in should be completely independent work. When citing someone else’s words and ideas, you must follow APA format.

Make-up Exams: Make-up exams will only be provided in cases of serious personal illness or family emergency. You will be required to provide documentation of such an event in order to be given a make-up exam. Invalid reasons for missing an exam include other exams on the same day, taking a vacation, and not being prepared. The make-up exams are slightly more difficult than the regular exams, so if you are just mildly ill, taking the regular exam will probably still be to your benefit.

Late assignments: Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be docked 10% for each day they are late (e.g., if an assignment is due on Monday at 7:00pm and it is turned in at 8:00pm on Monday, it will be docked 10%; if it is turned in on Tuesday at 7:00pm, it will be docked 10%; if it is turned in on Tuesday at 8:00pm, it will be docked 20%). Exceptions to this rule will only be made in cases of documented emergencies. Late papers must be handed in to me directly. Technology problems do not constitute legitimate excuses for late work.

Help Policy: I encourage you to ask questions and I will be accessible through several means. First, feel free to ask questions during class. Second, please take advantage of my office hours or make an appointment. Third, call my office phone number and ask over the phone or leave a message and I will get back to you. Finally, you may email your questions to me and you should receive a response within 24 hours.

Special Accommodations: Students who are eligible for special accommodations should confirm with Disability Services that Professor Shaikh has received appropriate notification. Eligible students should contact Professor Shaikh (via phone, email, office hours or before/after class) to arrange for accommodations. Out of respect for students’ privacy, Professor Shaikh will not contact or approach eligible students regarding special accommodations, even after she has been notified by Disability Services. Disability Services is located on the ground floor of the Library (room G003) and can be reached by calling extension 4825.

**Incompletes will be given only by special arrangement between student and Professor Shaikh.

Grading (See details for each assignment below):

- Participation and attendance 5%
- In-class activities and homework 30%
- Presentation of course material 10%
- Critique of assessment instrument 25%
- Exams (3 exams, 10% each) 30%
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<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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Note: This course is only offered for a letter grade.

**Requirements**

1. **Participation and Attendance.** Your participation and preparation for each class is vital for the successful mastery of material. Thus, your participation will be graded based on your in-class participation and attendance. You are required to attend all classes. If you come to class prepared, talk, and are thoughtful in your comments, you will have no problem with this component of the evaluation.

2. **In-Class Activities and Homework.** In order to enhance your understanding of course material, we will routinely complete activities relating to course material during class. In the event that we are unable to complete these activities in class, some activities may be assigned for completion as homework. You will also be writing exam questions as homework for each of the three exams. Details and deadlines will be provided in class.

3. **Presentation of Course Material.** Each student will be required to research and present a mini-lecture (approximately 20 minutes) on an assigned topic. Students will be assigned one of the following topics: Ethical Issues in Psychological Assessment; Intelligence Testing; Standardized Achievement Tests; Psychological Assessment in Medical Settings; Neuropsychological Testing; Psychological Assessment in School Settings; Psychological Assessment in Industrial/Organizational Settings; Personality Assessment; Psychological Assessment in Forensic Settings; and Projective Techniques.

4. **Critique of Assessment Instrument.** Each student will select one assessment instrument that has been introduced in class and write an analysis of the assessment instrument. Students should incorporate research articles that discuss the psychometric properties of the instrument that they will be evaluating. Papers should be 5-7 pages in length (typed, double-spaced, 1” margins, 12 pt. font). Details will be provided in class. Papers will be due on Monday 4/23.

5. **Exams.** Finally, there will be an exam at the end of each section of the course (2/27, 4/2, 5/7). Each exam will count for 10% of your final grade. The exams will be constructed by the class and will focus on the readings, lectures, and in-class activities. The exams will NOT be cumulative.
**Schedule** (subject to revision – check Moodle for updates)

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Assignment</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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| 1/30   | Historical and Professional Matters  
Statistics Review                     | Chapter 1  
Appendix A                                   |
| 2/6    | Test Design and Construction  
Test Administration and Scoring         | Chapter 2  
Chapter 3                                     |
| 2/13   | Item Analysis and Test Standardization  
*Student Presentation: Ethical Issues in Psychological Assessment*  
Reliability and Validity                       | Chapter 4  
Chapter 5                                     |
| 2/20   | Reliability and Validity cont.  
Write Exam 1 - Review                     | Chapter 5                                     |
| 2/27   | **Exam 1**  
Intelligence Testing  
*Student Presentation: Intelligence Testing* | Chapter 6                                     |
| 3/5    | Intelligence Testing cont.  
Individual and Group Differences in Cognitive Abilities | Chapter 6  
Chapter 7                                     |
| 3/12   | Standardized Achievement Tests  
*Student Presentation: Standardized Achievement Tests* | Chapter 9                                     |
| 3/19   | Applications and Issues in Ability Testing  
*Student Presentations: Psychological Assessment in School Settings; Psychological Assessment in Industrial/Organizational Settings*  
Write Exam 2 - Review                          | Chapter 10                                    |
| 4/2    | **Exam 2**  
Neuropsychological Assessment  
*Student Presentations: Psychological Assessment in Medical Settings; Neuropsychological Testing* | Chapter 8                                     |
| 4/9    | Personality Assessment: Origins, Applications, and Issues  
*Student Presentations: Personality Assessment; Psychological Assessment in Forensic Settings*  
Observations and Interviews                     | Chapter 14                                    |
| 4/16   | Vocational Interests  
*Guest Speaker: Linda Ross from Career Services*  
Checklists and Rating Scales                   | Chapter 12                                    |
| 4/23   | Objective Personality Inventories  
**Critique Due**                              | Chapter 17                                    |
| 4/30   | Projective Techniques  
*Student Presentation: Projective Techniques*  
Write Final Exam - Review                      | Chapter 18                                    |
| 5/7    | **Final Exam – Monday, May 7th 7:00-8:20 PM**                                  |                                              |