



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Department of Psychology
Psychology 671 (L01) - Psychological Assessment of Adults
Fall 2009

Instructor:	Dr. Kristin von Ranson	Lecture location:	A 053
Phone:	403-220-7085	Lectures:	Thurs 8:30-11:20AM
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Office Hours:	Thursdays 11:30-12:30 and by appointment	Labs:	A 135, Thurs 1:00-3:50 PM

Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of theoretical, professional, and ethical issues in psychological assessment and to develop competence in the administration and interpretation of selected instruments. The course will consist of integrated lectures and discussions, as well as student presentations. In addition to providing a basic understanding of the development and psychometric properties of each test, the course will provide students with hands-on practical experience both in the lab and in a clinical practicum setting. During the latter part of the course, students will conduct one or two assessments in a clinical setting under the supervision of a registered clinical psychologist.

Lectures will not simply repeat what's in the readings, although repetition in lecture of what you've read in a text is a good clue that something may come up on an exam. Feel free to ask questions, clarify, or discuss an issue. If something is unclear to you, it may be unclear to others; perhaps I haven't explained things well enough yet.

Required Texts and Readings

Groth-Marnat, G. (2009). *Handbook of Psychological Assessment* (5th ed.). New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Graham, J. (2006). *MMPI-2: Assessing Personality and Psychopathology* (4th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Selected readings. WAIS-III, WAIS-IV, MMPI-2, and MCMI-III and other test materials and manuals, as well as selected books (e.g., Sattler), are available through the Clinical Test Library (A272B).

For your information, the *Journal of Personality Assessment*, the *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, and *Psychological Assessment* are three key journals in this area. These journals and the *Mental Measurement Yearbooks* are available online through the library.

Integrity and Security of Test Materials

Throughout the course you will be provided with assessment materials. Responsible professional conduct dictates that you exercise careful control over the integrity and security of such materials. You may not supply materials or provide access to individual items and protocols to unqualified users.

Evaluation

In addition to completing assigned readings, you must successfully complete the following course requirements to pass this course.

Lab Component (Pass/Fail) – A separate outline is provided for this part of the course. Students must achieve a passing grade on both the class and lab components to pass this course. Includes interviewing skills and WAIS-IV and life history administration.

1. Two Assessment Reports (Pass/Conditional Pass/Fail)

For these reports, I will provide you with data from some combination of data from the WAIS, the MMPI-2, and/or the MCMI-III, as well as additional information (e.g. history, diagnostic interview, mental status) which you will be required to integrate. In the interest of good clinical practice, the emphasis will be on the clarity and brevity of psychological reports. Each assignment will receive one of the following grades: Pass/Conditional Pass (subject to revision)/Fail.

2. Minor Presentation (10%)

The purpose of this presentation is to describe a topical area in adult assessment. At the start of your presentation, you are required to distribute an outline of your presentation and an up-to-date list of up to 5 key references. Presentations should be 20 minutes long, plus up to 5 minutes for questions, and should describe the topic, highlighting key issues and reviewing the existing research and/or practice issues. Use the readings indicated as a starting point, and perform a search for newer articles, e.g., via a Web of Science forward search (ask if you don't know what this is).

Topics:

- a) *Analogue behavioral observation (class 2)*. Focus on adult examples from the special section, *Psychological Assessment* (2001), 13 (1), 3-98.
- b) *Self-monitoring (class 4)*. Special section, *Psychological Assessment* (1999), 11(4), 411-489.
- c) *Computerized, electronic and internet-based assessment (class 4)*. See the special sections, *Psychological Assessment* (2007), 19(1), 1-73; *American Psychologist* (2004), 59, 150-162; *Psychological Assessment* (2000), 12(1), 3-60.
- d) *WAIS-III and IV short forms (class 5)*. See relevant sections of Groth-Marnat and Sattler texts.

- e) *Emotional intelligence (class 6)* – validity and assessment. Salovey, P. & Grewal, D. (2005). The science of emotional intelligence. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 14, 281-285.
- f) *Outcome monitoring* – e.g., SCL-90, Brief Symptom Inventory Scales (**class 8**). Groth-Marnat, chapter 13.
- g) *Evidence-based assessment* (depression, anxiety, and/or personality disorders) (**Class 8**). Special section, *Psychological Assessment* (2005), 17 (3), 256-287; Hunsley & Mash (2007), *Annual Review of Psychology*, 3, 29-51.

3. **Major Presentation (30%)**

The goal of this presentation is to familiarize students with assessment techniques and issues related to specific adult populations and/or conditions affecting adults, including but not limited to the following: older adults, forensic populations, personality disorders, eating disorders, chronic pain/illness, substance abuse, risk of aggression, achievement testing (WIAT, WRAT-4). *You are required to submit a one-page outline of the presentation to the instructor three weeks prior to your presentation for review and approval of the topic.*

Presentations should be approximately 50 minutes in length, plus up to 5 minutes for questions. Distribute an outline of your presentation and a brief reference list to the audience at the start of your presentation. Provide an overview of your topic that includes a selective summary of existing research and clinical assessment issues, emphasizing best practices where possible. Consider the following points in framing your presentation.

- 1) According to the literature, what are the major issues and problems encountered in the assessment of the population/disorder?
 - 2) What are the symptoms/problems/limitations to be assessed?
 - 3) Review the best interview procedures suggested in the literature; critically evaluate their reliability and validity and any practical issues.
 - 4) Review the best psychometric measures used with the population/disorder and critically evaluate evidence for their reliability and validity.
 - 5) Discuss the use of special norms as appropriate.
 - 6) Which assessments procedures should be avoided, and why?
4. **Midterm exam (30%)** – Covers all lectures, readings, and presentations through Oct. 15. May include definitions, short and long answer questions.
 5. **Final exam (30%)** - Date TBA – Covers all lectures, readings, and presentations since Oct. 15. May include definitions, short and long answer questions.

6. **Complete one or two assessments in a clinical practicum setting and submit reports (Pass/Fail)**

Students will complete an intellectual and personality assessment (e.g., WAIS and MMPI-2) on a patient under the supervision of a registered psychologist, and will be expected to integrate assessment information from various sources and to use these data in the formulation of treatment plans. Students are expected to respect client confidentiality and, in general, to

behave in a professional and ethical manner at all times, both on- and off-site. Professional demeanor, clinical skills, and report-writing ability will be evaluated by your on-site supervisors on a pass/fail basis. In the unlikely event that you fail, you will be required to repeat the practicum component of the course.

Grading Scale:

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (i.e., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90%; 89.4% will be rounded down to 89%, etc.).

Class Topics and Readings – Tentative Schedule

See Blackboard for course announcements, notes, and information at <https://blackboard.ucalgary.ca/webapps/login/>.

Class 1 – Sept. 10 **Introduction to psychological assessment**

Groth-Marnat (2009). Chapter 1

Meyer, G. J., Finn, S. E., Eyde, L. D., Kay, G. G., Moreland, K. L., Dies, R. R., Eisman, E. J., Kubiszyn, T. W., & Reed, G. M. (2001). Psychological testing and psychological assessment: A review of evidence and issues. *American Psychologist*, 56, 128-165.

Class 2 – Sept. 17 **Scale development, scale evaluation, and assessment utility**

There are basically four issues or questions that are addressed in the following readings:

1. What are the steps involved in constructing an assessment scale? What about constructing an equivalent form for another cultural group?
2. How should the psychometric properties of a scale be evaluated?
3. What are reliability and validity, and why do they matter? The articles range from a basic treatment of validity issues (Simms & Watson, 2007) to more complex topics such as distinctions between representational versus elaborative validity, establishing validity for constructs/traits versus behaviours/response classes, and an in-depth discussion of content validity (e.g., relationship to construct validity, the importance of context, and

the dynamic nature of content validity).

4. What factors influence assessment utility? Included here are the importance of base rates and problems with using cut scores.

Focusing on the above issues may make these readings most helpful.

a) Scale construction, evaluation, and reliability and validity

Cicchetti, D. V. (1994). Guidelines, criteria, and rules of thumb for evaluating normed and standardized assessment instruments in psychology. *Psychological Assessment*, 6, 284-290.

Foster, S. L., & Cone, J. C. (1995). Validity issues in clinical assessment. *Psychological Assessment*, 7, 248-260.

Simms, L. J., & Watson, D. (2007). The construct validation approach to personality scale construction. In R. W. Robins, R. C. Fraley, & R. F. Krueger (Eds.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Personality Psychology* (pp. 240-258). New York: The Guilford Press.

Smith, G.T. (2005). On construct validity: Issues of method and measurement. *Psychological Assessment*, 17, 396-408. (Read pages 396-401 only).

b) Assessment utility

Dwyer, C. A. (1996). Cut scores and testing: Statistics, judgment, truth, and error. *Psychological Assessment*, 8(4), 360-362.

Kamphuis, J. H. & Finn, S.E (2002). Incorporating base rate information in daily clinical decision making. In J. N. Butcher (Ed.), *Clinical personality assessment: Practical approaches* (pp. 257-268). N.Y.: Oxford.

Class 3 –Sept. 24 **a) Clinical interviewing/Suicidality assessment – Dr. Deborah Dobson**

Groth-Marnat (2009). Chapter 3.

b) The Rorschach – Dr. Candace Konnert

Groth-Marnat, G. (2009). Chapter 10.

Lilienfeld, S. O., Wood, J. M., & Garb, H. N. (2000). The scientific status of projective techniques. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 1, 27-66.

Class 4 – Oct. 1 **Behavioural and cognitive-behavioural assessment/Legal and ethical issues,**

report writing and providing feedback

Groth-Marnat (2009). Chapters 2, 4, 15.

APA (2002). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct. *American Psychologist*, 57, 1060 – 1073. (Focus on sections on assessment).

College of Alberta Psychologists. (2005). Professional guidelines: The control and use of psychological tests.

College of Alberta Psychologists. (2005). Practice Bulletin: Protection and disclosure of psychological test data and materials: Ethical and legal obligations of psychologists (pp. 12-13).

Brenner, E. (2003). Consumer-focused psychological assessment. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 34, 240-247.

Pope, K. (1992). Responsibilities in providing psychological test feedback to clients. *Psychological Assessment*, 4, 268-271.

Class 5 – Oct. 8 Intellectual assessment

Groth-Marnat, G. (2009). Chapter 5.

Sattler, J. M. (2008). *Assessment of children: Cognitive foundations*. – WAIS-IV sections. San Diego: Jerome M. Sattler. (Read selectively.)

Gottfredson, L., & Saklofske, D. H. (2009). Intelligence: Foundations and issues in assessment. *Canadian Psychology*, 50, 183-195.

Class 6 – Oct. 15 a) Personality assessment

Lanyon, R. I., & Goodstein, L. D. (1997). *Personality assessment*. New York: Wiley. Chapter 2: Concepts and definitions (pp.30-54).

Wiggins, J. (2003). *Paradigms of personality assessment*. New York: Guilford. Chapter 4: The multivariate paradigm (pp. 124-163).

Hogan, R., Hogan, J., & Roberts, B. W. (1996). Personality measurement and employment decisions. *American Psychologist*, 51, 469-477.

b) The MMPI-2

Groth-Marnat, G. (2009). Chapter 7.

Graham, J. (2006). *MMPI-2: Assessing Personality and Psychopathology* (4th ed). New York: Oxford. (Read selectively, focusing on chapters 1-5, 7, 9-11.)

Hathaway, S. R. (1990). *MMPI-2: Manual for administration and scoring*. Minnesota: U. of Minnesota Press. (Available from the test library. Read selectively.)

Helmes, E., & Reddon, J. R. (1993). A perspective on developments in assessing psychopathology: A critical review of the MMPI and MMPI-2. *Psychological Bulletin*, 113, 453-471.

Class 7 – Oct. 22 **Midterm exam**

Class 8 – Oct. 29 **Personality assessment/MCMI-III, PAI; Malingering in assessment**

Groth-Marnat, G. (2009). Chapter 8.

Baer, R. A. & Miller, J. (2002). Underreporting of psychopathology on the MMPI-2: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Assessment*, 14, 16-26.

Rothke, S.E., Friedman, A.F., Jaffe, A.M., Greene, R.L., Wetter, M. W., Cole, P., & Baker, K. (2000). Normative data for the F(p) scale of the MMPI-2: Implications for clinical and forensic assessment of malingering. *Psychological Assessment*, 12, 335-340.

Class 9 – Nov. 5 **Cultural issues in assessment/Clinical judgment/Student presentations (2)**

Branch, C.B. (2005). Racial-cultural issues in clinical assessment. In R. Carter (Ed.), *Handbook of Racial-Cultural Psychology and Counselling: Training and Practice*, Vol. 2 (pp. 316-339). Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.

Suzuki, L. A., Kugler, J. F. & Aguiar, L. J. (2005). Assessment practices in racial-cultural psychology. In R. Carter (Ed.), *Handbook of Racial-Cultural Psychology and Counselling: Training and Practice*, Vol. 2 (pp. 297-315). Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.

Garb, H. N. (2005). Clinical judgment and decision making. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 67-89.

Class 10 – Nov. 12 – Reading Days; No Lectures

Class 11 – Nov. 19 **Neuropsychological assessment (Dr. Lisa Partlo)/Student presentation**

Groth-Marnat (2009). Chapter 12.

Class 12 – Nov. 26 **Wechsler Memory Scales/Student presentations (2)**

Groth-Marnat, G. (2009). Chapter 6.

Budson, A.E. & Price, B.H. (2005). Memory dysfunction. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 352, 692-699. (for reference only – will not be examined)

Class 13 – Dec. 3 **The relationship between psychological assessment and treatment planning/Student presentations (2)**

Groth-Marnat, G. (2009). Chapters 13, 14.

Harkness, A. R., & Lilienfeld, S. O. (1997). Individual differences science for treatment planning: Personality traits. *Psychological Assessment*, 9, 349-360.

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered

with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

Absence from a Test

Make-up exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). You must contact the instructor before the scheduled examination or you will have forfeited any right to make up the exam. At the instructor's discretion, a make-up exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup exam is written within two (2) weeks of the missed exam. A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test for health reasons. The student will be required to pay any cost associated with the Physician Counselor Statement.

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course and still receive a fee refund is **September 21, 2009**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **December 8, 2009**.

A copy of this course outline may be viewed on the Internet at the following web address:

<http://psychology.ucalgary.ca/courses>

Emergency Evacuation Assembly Points

Social Science Food Court (primary); ICT Food Court (secondary).