SW 614 Uses and Implications of Psychological Testing in Social Work

Fall 2003  Instructor: Steven Foley MSW PhD  Voice Mail: 734 663-9050 ext. 2
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Office hours: (after class and by appointment)

Course Description:

This class presents psychological testing as applied in educational and mental health settings. It covers some of the historical development of testing, its social functions, the technology of testing, and tests commonly used in schools and clinics. Social consequences of testing, and legal, and public policy issues are also discussed. Given that SW 614 fulfills a requirement for eligibility to become a school social worker, the primary emphasis of this course will be on learning testing and assessment information that will be useful in working in the public schools as a school social worker.

The course will include lectures, demonstrations, readings, and discussions regarding a broad range of assessment issues. Case examples will be presented and discussed and students are encouraged to contribute examples of assessment issues and concerns for discussion. In addition to the course material, I am aware that, as a current clinician and school psychologist, I will also be conveying a style and viewpoint of professional practice which may provide an additional model for students as they develop their own identity as a social worker.

Course Content:

The content of the course will cover a range of types of testing including cognitive, learning, projective, rating scale, and behavioral assessment approaches. In addition to formal psychological testing, the course will also discuss an array of assessment approaches that are relevant to serving as a school social worker. Particular objectives for the course are listed below:

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the uses of testing and assessment instruments commonly used in mental health and, particularly, in educational settings.
2. Understand the results and interpretations of commonly used psychological tests, and the relationship of this information to the assessment data that is generated by other professionals on an assessment team i.e., social workers, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, etc.

3. Understand the ethical issues related to the use of testing materials and results.

4. Understand and use assessment instruments that are appropriate for social work evaluations.

5. Understand the limitations of testing data including test reliability, validity, measurement error, and test bias.

6. Understand the relationship of tests and testing to the goals of the client, the agency, the community, and the applicable laws and regulations, particularly special education rules.

7. Understand the dynamics of sharing assessment results with clients and families and its impact on placement, program planning, and treatment or interventions.

8. Conduct effective assessment interviews with parents.

9. Understand assessment issues related to special populations/disorders such as attention disorders, Asperger syndrome, child bipolar disorder, depression, and anxiety.

Textbooks:

Required:


Requirements:

1. Midterm: in class exam
2. Final: in class exam
3. Completion of worksheets (provided by instructor)
4. Good attendance
5. Class participation

6. Paper (10-12 pages) on topic related to testing and measurement

Requirements #1 through #5 are required activities to be in the E through B+ range and only the B range. To have an opportunity to receive a grade in the A range you must also complete requirement #6. Completing #s 1 through 6 does not insure a grade in the A range, it only provides an opportunity for a grade in the A range. For those who elect to do the paper, **due date is Nov 19th.**

**Schedule:**

**Sept. 3th**
- Introduction to course and group introductions
- Introduction to Testing and Measurement (Wodrich, Chap. 1)
- The domain of testing, and testing in perspective
- Historical perspectives on testing development
- Ethical and legal issues in testing

**Sept. 10th**
- Test construction and psychometric issues (tentative)
- “Normalcy” and the normal curve
- Understanding test scoring (tentative)

**Sept. 17th**
- Intelligence theory, history, and controversy (Wodrich, Chap. 5)
- The WISC III

**Sept. 24th**
- Mental Impairment
- Other cognitive tests (DAS)
- Nonverbal IQ tests
- Theory of multiple intelligences

**Oct. 1nd**
- Achievement Testing and Learning Theory (Wodrich, Chap. 6)
- Learning Disabilities
- Achievement testing (WIAT, WRAT, WJ 3rd)
- History, controversy, uses, and limitations
- Relationship between academic testing and intervention
- Common learning strategies

**Oct. 8nd**
- Adaptive, Visual-motor, and Memory Assessment (Wodrich, p. 80-84, 4, 133-142)
- Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale
- Bender-Gestalt, Visual-Motor Integration Test
- Memory Scales
Oct. 15th  Preschool Assessment and Developmental Disorders (Wodrich, Chap. 4, Wodrich, p. 42-47)
-Assessment of cognitive functioning and developmental level
-Temperament
-Developmental disorders
-Interviewing preschoolers, working with parents
**Midterm Exam** (in class- 2nd half of class period)

Oct. 22nd  Questionnaire design: content relevant, empirical criterion keying, and factor analytic
Behavior rating scales, and Questionnaires
- Behavior rating scales:
  - broad spectrum and disorder specific disorder scales
- Self report inventories
- Structured interviews

Oct. 29th  Personality assessment: pathology
- The projective hypothesis and projective testing
  - Rorschach, TAT, RATC
  - Objective measures (MMPIs,)

Nov. 5th  Personality assessment: normal
- Briggs-Meyers
- Enneagram Type Indicator
- NEO Personality Inventory and the “Five-Factor Model”

Nov. 12th  Projective drawings
- Sentence completion

Nov. 19th  Neurological, Speech and Language, and Occupational Assessment (Wodrich, and p. 245-288)
-Domain of Neuropsychological assessment
-Domain of speech and language assessment
-Domain of Occupational assessment
**Due date for optional papers**

Nov. 26th  Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 3rd  Behavioral and Emotional Assessment (Wodrich, p.289-305)
-General Considerations
-E.I. evaluations
-“Social Maladjustment”
-Mental Status Exam
-Strategies for Working in the Schools
  - The referral process
  - Conducting a meeting
- The ER, MET, IEPC, 504s
- Classroom Observations, file reviews

Dec. 10th

Special Situations Assessments:
- ADHD/ADD (Wodrich, p. 290-298)
- Autism/Aspergers (Wodrich, p. 298-305)
- Non-verbal learning disabilities
- Central auditory processing disorder
- Depression and youth bipolar disorder

**FINAL EXAM** (in class - second half of class period)