EPSY 627 STRUCTURED PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT IN COUNSELING

Spring 2016

Instructor: Timothy Elliott, Ph.D.
telliott@tamu.edu
979-862-3095 but email is best

Assistant Instructor: Trey Armstrong
treywarmstrong@gmail.com

Room: 614 EDCT

Time: Tuesday, 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Course Objectives: Being able to administer, score, interpret and create integrated psychological reports is an important skill expected of all counseling psychologists. Moreover, being competent in this area will make you a more desirable internship applicant, post-doc applicant and job applicant. The purpose of this course is for students to be able to understand, administer, interpret and report on the most commonly used objective personality measures. This course will primarily focus on the following objective measures of personality:

- MMPI-2
- MMPI-2-RF (Restructured Form)
- Personality Assessment Inventory
- MCMI-III
- 16PF
- NEO-PI-R
- Others TBA

Required Reading*


Recommended Reading:


*Other readings from journal articles and chapters will be assigned

Class Activities:

Students will be assigned a weekly case that will include background information and one or more personality profiles on the same client. Integrated reports will be due at assigned class times. Prior to
class in which reports are due, email Trey a copy. We will review and critique reports before the beginning of each class. Poorly written reports or reports lacking the required information will be returned and the student will have until the next class period to turn in the rewrite. Students are encouraged to gain mastery in personality assessment and reports may be rewritten until an A is achieved.

Class time will be devoted to reviewing assigned readings, discussing previously assigned cases and learning additional personality tests.

**Student Responsibilities:**

- All students will be required to self-administer, score and interpret each personality test (results will remain confidential and we will not be discussing anyone’s results in class)
- Attendance is extremely important and will therefore be considered mandatory. Additional writing assignments will be given for missed classes. We understand that life can be unpredictable; if something comes up and missing class cannot be avoided please talk with the instructors as soon as possible.
- Read assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them in class.
- Complete all reports in a timely and polished fashion
- Adhere to and integrate feedback received for your reports and tasks.
- Professional and ethical behavior (timeliness, class participation, confidentiality)
- Give a presentation and a handout to the class in the final session about a specific instrument (details to follow). At a minimum, this will ensure required class participation.

**Grading:**

Generally, our grade scale reflects the following:

- A = Excellent work. Tasks are completed on time, student attends class, participates in discussion and acts professionally
- B = Good work/completed tasks or Excellent work/ incomplete tasks
- C = Inadequate work, remediation needed
- D = Skills below level required in the profession

More specifically, grading is first contingent upon demonstrating competency in administering, interpreting and communicating assessment results. Tasks will be assigned by the GTA, Trey Armstrong, throughout the semester. These are specified in this syllabus. He will grade each task and provide feedback. You will follow his advice, guidance, suggestions and directives. You will write a report if he decides this is necessary.

The final four tasks – all reports – will be the basis for your final grade. You must earn 90% correct on each of the final four tasks to earn an A for the class. This will demonstrate competency. The total scores for these four tasks will be averaged.

If two out of the four tasks or three out of the four tasks are less than 90% correct, you will earn a B for the course.
If all four are less than 90% remediation will be required.

If you fail to give a class presentation as stated in the syllabus, ten points will be deducted from the total average for the four tasks. If this drops the average to less than 90% for the four tasks, you will receive a B for the course. Similarly, if this drops the average to less than 80% for the four tasks, remediation is required.

**Grading the Tasks:** The graduate assistant must read and critique writing assignments and return them in a timely manner. Therefore, part of your grade is directly contingent upon being timely and punctual in turning in your assignments. When a task is assigned you must meet the assigned deadline. If you do not turn in the assignment at 5pm on the day it is due, 10 points will be deducted. If you do not turn in by 5 pm the following day, an additional 5 points will be deducted. If you do not turn it in by 5 pm the following day another 5 points will be deducted. There may be “rewrites” assigned to compensate for missing a deadline.

If you make a “C” in this class you cannot take the assessment practicum (the next course in the training sequence). If you make a “B” in this class your internship site applications will draw unwanted attention from colleagues at those sites who determine who will be invited for an interview.

You want to make an A in this class. So turn in your assignments on time.

**Portfolio:**

A personality assessment portfolio is required to meet all requirements of the course. This portfolio is meant to be a quick reference guide that you can use in the assessment practicum course or other advanced practicums you will attend in the future. It should be split up into major sections with each one pertaining to an assessment instrument. All major assessment instruments covered in the course must be included. Each section must contain all the key information necessary to interpret that assessment including how to interpret validity scales and all clinical scales. A good portfolio should not require much additional research of information that is not already presented to you in the course; however, it may require some reorganizing or selection of key information that you find important. All handouts and chapters given to you in the course can be included; however, they should be annotated by you in some way (cover sheet, instructions, annotated notes) to show how you would use them. The portfolio must be checked by the TA in order for your final report to be graded. The portfolio itself is ungraded; however, the TA reserves the right to require the student to revise any sections that are unsatisfactory.

**Class Presentation:**

At the final class session (see below) you will give a presentation on an instrument that you will select, self-administer, and research. This will include a powerpoint presentation and a handout to the class. This will demonstrate ability to evaluate and discuss instruments that can be used in assessment for clinical, consultation and research purposes.
Most of these instruments are in the CAC Test Library (now at Milner) but some may be available elsewhere (I am determined to find a copy the Eysenck). NOTE: At least one person MUST select the California Personality Inventory. If you have access to another omnibus instrument I may consider it for your presentation (e.g., an instrument available to you at your field practicum site).

A handout will be provide to organize the presentation, but you will address the following:

- Overview of the instrument
- Important and essential psychometric information
- Procedures for administering and interpreting the results
- Use of the instrument in practice and research (based on published reviews in the peer-review literature)
- Your evaluation the benefits and shortcomings of the instrument
- Implications for use in clinical and research applications

Available Instruments:

- Allport/Vernon/Lindzey Study of Values
- BASC - College
- Brief Symptom Inventory
- California Personality Inventory
- Career Assessment Inventory
- Eysenck Personality Inventory
- FACES-III
- Family Environment Scale (2nd edition)
- Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation – Behavior (FIRO-B)
- Strong Interest Inventory
- Trauma Symptom Inventory

SCHEDULE

January 19 — Class 1

- **Task 1: Self-Administration and Self-Scoring of MMPI-2, PAI, MCMI-III**
  - With the relocation of the CAC Test Library from Heaton to Milner you will (a) work with Trey to gain access to these instruments and (b) you are expected to have these completed by spring break. Trey will give you explicit instructions about this and other tasks requiring test administration and scoring.

January 26 — Class 2

- **Task 2: Clinical Interview and Clinical History**
  - Class Topic: The context for assessment, preparing the assessment. Conducting a clinical interview. The mental status interview. Read the chapters below BEFORE class.


**February 2 – Class 3**
- **Task 3: Validity Scales—MMPI-2**
- **Class Topic:** Theories and issues, cont’d. Ethics. MMPI validity scales.

**February 9 – Class 4**
- **Task 4: Clinical Scales and Clinical Configurations—MMPI-2**
- **Class Topic:** MMPI applications, making descriptions vs. predictions, indicators of therapeutic response.

**February 16 – Class 5**
- **Task 5: Content Scales and the MMPI-2 RF**
- Discussion of above topics.

**February 23 – Class 6**
- **Task 6: Interpretive Report Writing—MMPI-2**
- **Class Topic:** MMPI and report writing.

**March 1 – Class 7**
- **Task 7: Personality Disorder Scales and Configurations—MCMI-III**
- **Class Topic:** Millon assessment instruments, issues and applications.

**March 8 – Class 8**
- **Task 8: Interpretive Report Integrating MMPI-2 with MCMI-III**
- **Class Topic:** Integrating clinical issues with MMPI and MCMI.
  - Complete the previous reading assignment from the Choca (2010) book.

**SPRING BREAK**

**March 22 – Class 9**
- **Task 9: Introduction to PAI; Validity, Clinical, Treatment and Interpersonal Scales**
- **Class Topic:** Learning the PAI.
March 29 – Class 10
- Task 10: Validity, Clinical, Treatment and Interpersonal Scales—PAI
- Class Topic: Clinical applications with the PAI.
  - Readings to be distributed.

April 5 – Class 11
- Task 11: Interpretive Report Integrating MMPI-2 with PAI—PAI/Self-Administration and Self-Scoring of 16-PF and NEO-PI-R
- Class Topic: Implications for personality assessment in working with special populations and settings: health care, disability, special accommodations, diversity issues.*

April 12 – Class 12
- Task 12: Global Factors, Bipolar Dimension of Personality, and Interpretive Report—16 PF

April 19 – Class 13
- Task 13: Five Factor Model of Personality and Interpretive Report—NEO-PI-R/
- Class Topic: Block’s developmental model of personality and Resilience, Overcontrolled, Undercontrolled prototypes. Rushton’s single factor; stability and plasticity; alpha and beta subtypes.

April 26 – Class 13
- Task 14: Final Interpretive Report Integrating Multiple Personality Assessments/Self-Administrations
- Class Topic: Assessing specific domains (e.g., depression, anxiety, PTSD) in a comprehensive psychological evaluation.

May 3 – Class 14
- Class presentations

May 6 — Task 14: Final Report Due, Portfolio Due

NOTE: Relevant journals that routinely feature studies and topical papers on course content include the Journal of Personality Assessment, Psychological Assessment, Assessment, European Journal of
Psychological Assessment. You may also want to visit the website for the Society of Personality Assessment: [http://www.personality.org/](http://www.personality.org/)

**Americans with Disabilities Act:**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protections 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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services in Cain Hall Room B118, (979) 845-1637. More information about Services for Students with Disabilities can be found at [http://disability.tamu.edu](http://disability.tamu.edu).

**Academic Integrity Statements**

**AGGIE HONOR CODE**

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do."

Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System.

For additional information please visit: [http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor](http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor)

**Students with special needs:** Any student who could require assistance in the event of a necessary evacuation of the building in which this class is taught are asked to notify the instructor so that individuals can be identified to assist him/her during an examination.