

## Psychological Assessment

PSYC 265/PSYC 300D

Winter 2018

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<b>Office:</b>	SMC E118
<b>Office hours:</b>	M 6 <sup>th</sup> , Th 3 <sup>rd</sup> , or by appointment
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<b>Class:</b>	MWF, 9:20-10:30 (2 <sup>nd</sup> period), SMC A107

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### Course Overview

Psychological assessment is the method used to formally measure traits, feelings, and abilities to help explain behavior and guide decisions. For instance, IQ and achievement tests help identify learning disorders, neuropsychological tests can uncover memory problems following brain injury, and aptitude tests can reveal strengths and interests. In this course, you will be introduced to commonly used psychological tests (IQ, achievement, personality, psychopathology, neuropsychological, career aptitude), basic psychometrics (test properties), and development of your own psychological measure.

It is important to be aware that this class alone will not qualify you to competently or ethically administer and interpret psychological tests. Rather, the focus of the course is on gaining knowledge related to test theory and test construction that will allow you to evaluate critically the tests considered in the course and those that are in use in the field of psychological testing.

### Learning Goals

- To develop a basic understanding of psychometric concepts (e.g., reliability, validity) related to tests, test construct, and validation
- To understand the basic principles of psychological assessment, including administration of major psychological tests used to assess personality, ability, and aptitude
- To be able to analyze and interpret data collected as part of a test administration
- To understand social and ethical issues related to psychological assessment.

### What We Will be Reading

Salkind, N. J. (2013). *Tests & Measurement for People Who (Think They) Hate Tests & Measurement* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

We will also read several articles and chapters that are not part of your textbook – these are available to you on our course Moodle page.

I will post my lecture slides on Moodle by the start of each class. The slides don't always represent everything we cover in class, such as content covered through discussion or class activities. Therefore, the slides are not a good replacement for coming to class and taking your own notes. There may not be a formal lecture every day; if there is no formal lecture, no notes will be posted.

## Resources You May Find Useful in This Course:

For research article search help: <http://knox.libguides.com/Psyc282?hs=a>

Useful journals to find articles on assessment (available through PsycInfo or Interlibrary Loan): *Assessment; Psychological Assessment; Psychological Methods; Qualitative Psychology; Journal of Applied Psychology; Organizational Research Methods; Psychological Bulletin; Behavior Research Methods; Journal of Personality Assessment; Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*

Division 5 of the American Psychological Association (Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics) web site: <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div5/>

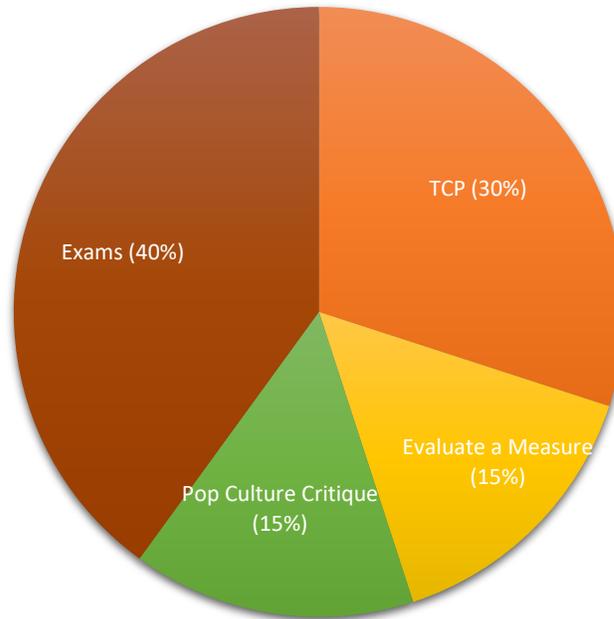
## How We Will Spend Class Time

We will take a variety of approaches to learning course material together. Class sessions will include lectures, demonstrations, small-group discussions, and in-class practice of course concepts. You will work in Learning Teams that will be formed at the beginning of the course, and these teams will remain in place throughout the term.

## How We Will Assess Learning in This Course

- 1. Test Construction Project.** To gain a better understanding of assessment, you will have the opportunity to develop a test to measure a psychological construct. Working in groups, you will create and pilot your assessment instrument and use the data to evaluate the properties of your measure. The completed project will include a final paper as well as a class presentation. Various steps toward completion of this project are due throughout the term. More details will be provided in class and assignment instructions are posted on Moodle.
- 2. Evaluate a Measure.** To practice locating and thinking critically about established psychological tests, you will select a measure of interest to you, locate and read the original development article, and write a brief paper evaluating the properties of the measure. More details will be provided in class and assignment instructions are posted on Moodle.
- 3. Pop Culture Test Critique.** These days there is no lack of popular media “psychological” tests available online (think *Which Star Wars Character Are You?*). Though most of them have little to no psychometric data available, those who take these tests often believe there is some truth to the results. Given one of the goals of this course is to encourage you to critique psychological tests, you will have the chance to analyze one of these online tests based on concepts learned in the course. More details will be provided in class and assignment instructions are posted on Moodle.
- 4. Exams.** There will be two in-class exams and one exam during Finals Week. Exams will be cumulative in the sense that earlier material (e.g., reliability, validity, norms, test construction) will need to be understood, as it is relevant to content covered later in the class. Questions will be drawn from textbook and assigned readings, lectures, class discussion, and activities. The exam format may include multiple choice, true/false, short answer items, and essays. More information will be provided in class prior to exam dates.

## How each of your assignments contributes to your final course grade:



### Some Details about Course Assignments

**Turning Work In.** Assignments are due on the assigned date by the beginning of class (9:20 a.m.) unless otherwise specified, and are submitted through Moodle unless otherwise noted or arranged. Feedback on your assignments will similarly be available to you through Moodle. My preference is that assignments are written in Microsoft Word; if this is not possible, please come talk with me about alternatives. Please be sure your name is somewhere on your assignment – either in the document title or in the document itself.

If for any reason you are unable to turn in an assignment at the time it is due, please still turn it in! An assignment turned in by midnight on the date it is due will have 5% taken off. An additional 10% will be taken off for each additional 24-hour period that the assignment is late. Presentations cannot be accepted after the due date.

**Psychology Writing Policy.** Because effective writing is a foundational skill in the field of psychology, the psychology department has implemented a common writing policy in all PSYC courses at the 200- and 300-level. The policy was developed to highlight common writing mistakes so that we can all work toward decreasing making those mistakes. In this course, the policy applies to all graded written assignments; it does not apply to in-class exams. A copy of the full writing policy has been posted to our class Moodle page and is also available on the Psychology webpage. Please review this policy in detail prior to beginning your first writing assignment. I am very happy to meet with you if you have questions about the policy itself or any of the specific writing mistakes outlined in the policy.

(Writing Mistake 3b in the policy (“pronoun-antecedent agreement”) refers to using a plural pronoun to refer to a singular person. For example, “When a person does not study for a test, they often fail”. I recognize that “they” may sometimes be used to refer to an individual, such as when it is a preferred pronoun or the preferred pronoun is unknown. If you use “they” to refer to an individual in your writing, please just include a note to me that indicates that this is the intended use).

**The Knox College Honor Code.** As members of this course, we are each committed to acting ethically with regard to what we say and write, and to give credit to those whose ideas we are building our own work on. We will work together to understand the basics of academic integrity, such as citing sources and putting ideas into our own words. I encourage you to read more about Knox's Honor Code (which was developed by students for students) here:

[http://www.knox.edu/offices/academic-affairs/honor-code-and-procedures.html#the\\_knox\\_college\\_honor\\_code](http://www.knox.edu/offices/academic-affairs/honor-code-and-procedures.html#the_knox_college_honor_code)

### **You as a Person in this Course**

I am looking forward to working with each of you and as a group this term. This class aims to be an inclusive learning environment that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities as you define them (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.). You have the right to be called by the name and pronouns that you prefer; if you do not want to state these things in the classroom, please come talk with me individually. We will work to support each other in the discovery and sharing of ideas and questions in this course.

I recognize that life circumstances can have an impact on learning. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, or you are struggling emotionally, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. In addition, Knox provides free confidential counseling services at the Counseling Center. I am happy to help you make contact with their office.

If you know that you will need to miss an exam, please discuss this with me as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made ahead of time. I understand that not all circumstances are predictable, and that illness, death in the family, or other events unfortunately are part of life. If such a circumstance arises and you miss an exam, please contact me as soon as you are able.

**What to do if you need help with reading, writing, or course material.** I encourage you to come talk with me if you are finding any aspect of the course challenging. There are many reasons someone might be facing a challenge and I look forward to working with you to help you succeed.

If you think you have a disability that may be affecting your ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements, you are encouraged to contact Stephanie Grimes in the Disabilities Services Office. Stephanie can help us to establish the best strategies for your learning. I am happy to implement the recommendations made by Stephanie and will always keep your information confidential.

The Center for Teaching and Learning also has several excellent resources that may be useful to you in this course (and others!). I encourage you to take advantage and am happy to give you more information.

- The Writer's Workshop is available to help you with any aspect of your writing – generally or for specific assignments. Writer's Workshop is available on a walk-in basis in the Seymour Library Andrews Forum (Sunday and Monday, 7-9 p.m.), the CTL (Monday through Friday, 12-4 p.m.), and the Seymour Library 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 7-9 p.m.)
- The Red Room Tutoring Program [SMC Library] offers trained peer tutors in Psychology who are ready to tutor you on a walk-in basis Tues, Wed, and Thurs nights, from 7 to 9 p.m.

**Nature of Course Material.** In this class, we will study several different forms of assessment and its application. Although not the focus of the course itself, within the context of studying these assessment methods, we will also necessarily discuss related psychological disorders, symptoms, experiences, etc., that may be assessed by psychologists; ethical issues in assessment; and the intersection between things like culture, SES, race, etc. and psychological testing. If you have concerns about any upcoming course content, please come talk with me.

Below is the *tentative* calendar. We will generally stick close to the topics/dates listed, but occasionally spend more/less time on a given topic. If any major changes (i.e., due dates) are necessary, they will be announced in class and via email.

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment
<b>Week 1</b>			
W 1/3	Why are Tests Important?	--	
F 1/5	Variables and Measurement	Ch. 1 & 2	
<b>Week 2</b>			
M 1/8	Reliability Guest speaker: Sharon Clayton	Ch. 3	
W 1/10	Reliability	Ch. 3	
F 1/12	Reliability & Validity	Ch. 3 & 4	TCP Part 0
<b>Week 3</b>			
M 1/15	Validity	Ch. 4	
W 1/17	Validity	C. 4	
F 1/19	<b>NO CLASS</b>		Evaluate a Measure paper
<b>Week 4</b>			
M 1/22	Norms	Ch. 5	
W 1/24	<b>Exam 1</b>	<b>Covers all content through/including Validity</b>	
F 1/26	Norms & Test Construction	Ch. 5; Watson & Clark (1995)	
<b>Week 5</b>			
M 1/29	Test Construction	Ch. 8; Watson & Clark (1995)	TCP Part 1
W 1/31	Test Construction	Ch. 10	
F 2/2	Test Construction	Tobacyk (2004)	
<b>Week 6</b>			
M 2/5	Tests in Educational Settings	Ch. 13	Pop Culture Critique paper
W 2/7	Tests in Educational Settings	Ch. 13 & 16	
F 2/9	Tests in Educational Settings	Ch. 16	TCP Part 2
<b>Week 7</b>			
M 2/12	Tests in Clinical Settings	Ch. 12; Miller & Lovler (2016)	
W 2/14	<b>Exam 2</b>	<b>Covers Norms through/including Educational Settings*</b>	
F 2/16	Tests in Clinical Settings	Miller & Lovler (2016)	TCP Part 3
<b>Week 8</b>			
M 2/19	Tests in Clinical Settings	Ch. 14	
W 2/21	Tests in Industry	Ch. 17	
F 2/23	Tests in Industry	Ch. 17	
<b>Week 9</b>			
M 2/26	Ethics & other considerations	Ch. 18	
W 2/28	Ethics & other considerations	Ch. 19	
F 3/2	<b>In-Class Presentations</b>		TCP Group Presentation
<b>Week 10</b>			
M 3/5	<b>In-Class Presentations</b>		TCP Group Presentation
W 3/7	Course Wrap-Up		TCP Part 4 Final Paper
TBD	<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>Covers Clinical Settings through/including Ethics**</b>	

\* While the test will focus on the new material since Exam 1, you will still be expected to be able to apply previous concepts, such as reliability and validity, to the new content

Below is the *tentative* calendar. We will generally stick close to the topics/dates listed, but occasionally spend more/less time on a given topic. If any major changes (i.e., due dates) are necessary, they will be announced in class and via email.

\*\* While the test will focus on the new material since Exam 2, you will still be expected to be able to apply previous concepts, such as reliability, validity, norms, and test construction to the new content

TCP = Test Construction Project