

## SW 614 Uses and Implications of Psychological Testing in Social Work

Spring/Summer 2012  
Tuesday, 6:00 to 10:00 PM  
Room: 3752 SSWB  
Section 001

Instructor: Emily Verbeke, Ed.S, NCSP  
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"SW614" somewhere in the subject)

Office Hours: Tuesday 4:30 to 5:30 or via Skype or iChat by appointment or by appointment

### Course Description

This course will cover a range of types of testing including cognitive, learning, personality, speech, visual-motor and behavioral assessment approaches. In addition to formal psychological testing, the course will also discuss an array of assessment approaches that are relevant to the role of a school social worker. Because 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 with youth in the educational settings.

### Course Content

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. The implication of testing on various diversity dimensions such as ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender including gender identity and gender expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex and sexual orientation will be presented.

### Course Objectives

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

1. Understand assessment instruments commonly used in mental health and particularly, in educational settings.
2. Interpret 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, special education teachers, general education teachers, etc.
3. Describe ethical issues related to the use of testing materials and results.
4. Use assessment instruments that are appropriate for social work evaluations.
5. Describe limitations of testing data including test reliability, validity, measurement error, and test bias.
6. Know 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. Describe assessment issues related to special populations/disorders such as attention disorders, Asperger syndrome, child bipolar disorder, depression, and anxiety.

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### Course Design

The course will include lectures, demonstrations, readings, discussions co-led by students, and case analysis 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.

### Relationship of the Course to the Four Curricular Themes

- *Multiculturalism and Diversity* will be explored through investigating the relationship between types of testing and its potential for differential impact on various populations in regard to such diversity dimensions such as ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex and sexual orientation. This will include discussions of incidents of the inappropriate use of testing, both past and present as it pertains to these various populations
- *Social Justice and Social Change* and its relationship to testing and assessment will be explored particularly as it relates to the impact of assessment methods on inappropriate labeling and/or placement decisions. Emphasis will also be placed on exploring the current national campaign for accountability through systematic testing and the resulting misuse of testing. The impact on intervening variables in test results will also be discussed particularly as they relate to students and communities that are lower socioeconomic characteristics.
- *Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation* and the role of testing and measurement will be explored with particular emphasis on the limits of test results in making decisions regarding diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitative decisions.
- *Behavioral and Social Science Research* will be presented in this course to support the theoretical, statistical, and clinical basis for test designs and assessment procedures. Research will also be referenced regarding the beneficial as well as inappropriate use of tests in particular situations.

### Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:

Social work ethics and values will be addressed within the course as they pertain to issues related to working with clients and their parents, and colleagues. The NASW Code of Ethics, National Association of School Psychologists Principals for Professional Practice and the Ethical Standards of the American Psychological Association documents will be used to give students directions about these ethical issues.

### Intensive Focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice (PODS)

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate social injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural framework and strengthen critical consciousness, self-knowledge and self-awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

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### **Students with Unique Circumstances or Learning Challenges**

Students who have circumstance that could possibly put them at a disadvantage in their participation in the course should bring this to my attention as early in the course as possible. “Unique circumstances” can range from having a chronic condition such as a disability that could affect mobility, concentration, learning, or academic productivity to a transient condition such as temporary environmental stressors, economic factors, or pregnancy that may also have an impact on your learning. My goal is to maximize your learning of the material during the time in my class and this can be done through various accommodations unique to your circumstances. If you feel it would be helpful I would be happy to meet with you to discuss your situation and, if it is helpful, we could also draw up a set of understanding about what accommodations would be appropriate and helpful for you.

### **Class Norms**

1. Attendance and active participation are expected and incorporated into the grade.
2. Socially and academically responsible use of personal electronic devices is expected.
3. Utilize CTools website for course readings, discussions, questions, and completion of assignments.
4. Proactive and engaged learning is encouraged.

### **Course Texts**

There are no required textbooks however; assigned weekly readings will be posted on CTools under the “Resource Tab”. A folder for each class session has been developed. In order to fully participate in class discussions as well as pass the quizzes it is important to read all of the required posted items for each class. Required readings are designed to provide you with background knowledge in preparation for the week’s in-class lecture, discussion, case work and practice.

### **Additional Readings**

Information and suggestions about a variety of resources (articles, videos, websites, books, etc.) that are related to course topics will be posted on the CTools site. Extending your learning in to areas of personal interest only makes the course more valuable to you.

### **Requirements**

1. Three Quizzes
2. 2 test protocol workups  
You will score and interpret 2 protocol packets that contain a number of measures. Grades for a packet will be assigned only after a complete packet is received with all designated materials. Grades will be based on accurate scoring, as well as the interpretive summaries associated with each measure. Your summary of the results should include some information about what the test measures, and the validity of your results, as well as your interpretation of the scores. The summaries should be about 1-3 paragraphs in length. You must complete and attach a scoring rubric for each packet to ensure you have completed the packet and summary accurately.

For each packet you must also include a paragraph that addresses the following questions:

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|----|---|--|
| 1. | What was your experience like using these instruments (were you comfortable, were certain aspects easy or hard, etc.)?        |  |
| 2. | What information were you hoping to obtain from these instruments? Did you obtain what you were wanting?                      |  |
| 3. | Perceived strengths and weaknesses of these instruments   |  |
| 4. | Will these instruments be useful to you in the future and why?  |  |
| 5. | If no, how could the instruments be improved to be more useful?   |  |
| 6. | What other information do you wish you could have obtained with these measures that would have helped you in your assessment? |  |
| 3. | 2 test protocol peer evaluations (in class assignment)  |  |
| 4. | Group Case work-up and in-class presentation  |  |

Everyone will be provided with the same packet containing 2-4 completed protocols. You will need to score and interpret these protocols. You should then incorporate these scores with the background information and behavioral observations you have been provided. In-class we will work through completing IEP paperwork for this child. You should be prepared to contribute to the social-emotional sections, as well as the accommodations section. In addition, based on the results, you should develop two goals (and corresponding objectives for each goal)

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| 5. | Assessment review and in-class presentation   |  |
| 6. | Good attendance   |  |
| 7. | Class participation   |  |
| 8. | Points for class participation can be earned from in-class participation (1 point per class session) and for on-line discussion participation (1 point per week).<br>Optional paper (8-10 pages) on topic related to testing and measurement. |  |

### Grading System

The grading system contains two options. The option you choose will depend on your particular situation this semester

#### **Option 1:**

You complete requirements #1 through #7 listed above  
The requirements will be worth as follows:

1. Three Quizzes (20 points each)	60 points
2. 2 test protocol workups (30 points each)	60 points
3. 2 test protocol peer evaluations (10 points each)	20 points
4. Group Case work-up and in-class presentation	40 points
5. Assessment review and in-class presentation	20 points
6. Good attendance	10 points
7. Class participation	20 points

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Total:	230 points
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IF you select Option #1 you will be a candidate for receiving a grade ranging from E up to B+ regardless of how well you do on requirements #1 through #7. You will not be a candidates for receiving a grade in the A range.

### Option 2:

You complete requirements #1 through #8 listed above  
The requirements will be worth as follows:

1. Three Quizzes (20 points each)	60 points
2. 2 test protocol workups (30 points each)	60 points
3. 2 test protocol peer evaluations (10 points each)	20 points
4. Group Case work-up and in-class presentation	40 points
5. Assessment review and in-class presentation	20 points
6. Good attendance	10 points
7. Class participation	20 points
8. Optional Paper	30 points
Total:	260 points

## SW 614 Uses and Implications of Psychological Testing in Social Work

### Schedule Overview of Lecture Topics

Week	Date	Topic	Additional Info.
1	5/8/12	Introduction to Course and Background to Testing and Measurement	
2	5/15/12	Psychometrics and Understanding Scoring	
3	5/22/12	Behavior Rating Scales and Questionnaires	
4	5/29/12	Behavioral and Emotional Assessment	Quiz 1
5	6/5/12	Intelligence Testing Cognitive Impairment & Developmental Disabilities	Packet 1 Due
6	6/12/12	Adaptive Behavior, Visual-motor and Memory, Speech & Language Assessment	
7	6/19/12	Achievement Testing and Preschool Assessment	Quiz 2
8	6/26/12	Neurological & neuropsychological Assessment	Packet 2 Due
9	7/3/12	Assessment of Special Populations	Optional Paper Due
10	7/10/12	Assessment of Special Populations - Cont.	Quiz 3
11	7/17/12	Personality assessment: Projective and Objective	Last class Group case