

COURSE SYLLABUS

Overview and Goals

Students begin the first semester of their two-semester course sequence in Practicum in Child Assessment. Students conduct practicum work in the on-campus PEER clinic and local school systems, where they will conduct 4 comprehensive evaluations of referred children during the fall semester. For PEER cases, students are supervised by the course instructor, and for school cases, they receive supervision from both the on-site school supervisor and course instructor. The expectation for the course is that students will become increasingly autonomous in applying knowledge and skills to conduct psycho-educational assessments, particularly in the spring semester. Test protocols are reviewed by the course's teaching assistant (Jessica Albrecht) according to procedures outlined in the PEER Manual.

A major goal of the course is the systematic application of concepts, strategies, and tools to the process of diagnostic assessment. In so doing, students will engage in the following activities throughout the semester: (Note: These activities are consistent with developing NASP competencies 2.1, 2.4, and 2.8):

1. Identify and clarify the referral questions, conduct a record review, and plan an evaluation;
2. Interview children, parents, teachers, and/or others involved in the care or education of the child;
3. Observe children in the classroom and during the evaluation process;
4. Administer an appropriate battery of psycho-educational tests (e.g., cognitive, achievement, developmental, social-emotional-behavioral measures);
5. Learn about new measures and procedures that are pertinent to cases;
6. Score, interpret, and write up test results;
7. Integrate and synthesize material from a variety of tests and other sources in relation to the referral issues and formulate recommendations for interventions;
8. Effectively communicate interpretations and recommendations in written form;
9. Effectively communicate information from the evaluation orally to parents, teachers, other professionals, and/or the examinee as appropriate;
10. Reflect on professional practice following the scientist-practitioner model by synthesizing information from various assessment sources with research and theory;
11. Attend the relevant meetings in the school settings, when possible.

Please note the assumptions about assessment (Teglasi):

- Assessment is conducted for the purpose of understanding the concerns presented about the child to make informed decisions and select appropriate intervention strategies.
- A “problem” is understood in relation to the whole child as he or she interacts in various contexts (family, school, community) and responds to various situations and tasks.
- Assessment is not a matter of giving tests and reporting test scores. Rather, it is a systematic process of gathering information requiring insight and judgment. Competent assessments demand an open mind and careful examination of various sources and types of data, including prior history, current concerns, performance/behaviors in various life contexts, and responses to the administered measures, as well as reports obtained from various sources.

**Practicum in Child Assessment - Part 1
EDCP 738**

Fall 2015, Thursdays 9 – 12:15 (Schlossberg Conf. Room)

Instructor: Dr. Jill Berger

E-Mail: jmberger@umd.edu

Office: EDU 3208, hours by appt.

Office: 301-405-0687, Cell: 757-621-5621

- Various theoretical perspectives give rise to specific assessment principles and strategies. A flexible repertoire of theoretical constructs and assessment tools best equips students to tackle the range of presenting problems encountered.
- Competence in diagnostic assessment requires the synthesis of a broad knowledge base (development, psychopathology, individual differences, measurement theory) and mastery of specific tools and strategies. These competencies cannot be taught formulaically in step-by-step or cookbook fashion. Rather, students synthesize concepts and models that are woven together during supervision of individual case studies so that theory and practice are systematically integrated.
- Assessment data are placed into context in three ways (Teglasi et al., 2012): (1) child as context – each data point is understood in the context of the whole child; the various attributes within a child team up to face the environment; (2) child of context – what has been learned or not learned from past experience continues to influence current functioning, hence a developmental perspective is taken; and (3) child in context – functioning depends on the match between the child’s developing resources and the demands of various contexts; the “match” in current and anticipated future contexts is considered.

Course Information and Requirements

Class Participation: This doctoral-level course is taught as a practicum/seminar. Most weeks, there will be assessment activities ongoing from approximately 9 to 11 am, followed by a class meeting from 11 am to 12:15 pm. When students do not have a current PEER case, they are expected to arrive to class on time, observe the ongoing cases from the observation room, and provide feedback to their classmates. During class meetings, discussion will be the primary instructional approach, rather than lecture. Class participation is critical. Students are expected to complete assigned readings, discuss their own cases, and participate in discussions about other students’ cases.

Discussion Topic Leadership: Students will select one topic relevant to a case they are working on and lead the class in a discussion about this topic. Topics might include: assessment considerations for a specific population, information about an assessment instrument, research on a particular intervention, etc. The instructor is available to help students identify topics and relevant readings. Students will need to (a) review background information on the topic, (b) select reading material to distribute to the class at least one week beforehand, and (c) lead a discussion with the class using discussion questions, handouts, or other materials. Students will have approximately 20 minutes for their discussion topic.

Four Completed Psycho-Educational Evaluations: Most students will complete 1 case at the on-campus PEER clinic and 3 cases in the school setting (4 total). For most cases, the test battery will include measures of cognitive functioning, academic achievement, relevant behaviors, and social-emotional functioning. Students should review instruments by reading the test manual and practicing administration, becoming familiar with standardized procedures prior to testing sessions. Questions about administration and specific instruments should be raised during class and/or individual supervision. Students should submit the de-identified, password protected, final reports from their school cases to the course instructor on Canvas as cases are completed throughout the semester.

School Cases: Please refer to the Assessment Practicum Agreement for detailed information about procedures and responsibilities for school cases. Students are strongly encouraged to

work with their on-site school supervisors to identify and begin cases early in the semester, so that three school cases are completed by early December.

Student	Supervisor	Supervisor contact
Ranga Atapattu	Lisa Phifer	lisa.phifer@pgcps.org
Molly Kim	Maia Greene-Havas	maia.greenehavas@pgcps.org
Arianna Lashley	Kristi Maslak	kristi.maslak@pgcps.org

Dr. Bill Young (william2.young@pgcps.org; 301-643-1969) is the Prince George’s County Public Schools Practicum Coordinator.

PEER Case: Please refer to the PEER Manual 2015-2016 for detailed information about procedures and forms for PEER cases, as well as important information about the assessment process. Each PEER case involves an intake interview with parents (conducted by the instructor and student together), approximately three testing sessions (conducted by the examiner), and a feedback conference with parents (conducted by the instructor and student together). It may also be appropriate to provide feedback to the older child/adolescent (conducted by the student and possibly the instructor).

Assessment Plans and Reports: After a case is received and background information is collected, students should draft an assessment plan outlining their proposed test battery and explaining test instrument selection. The plan should specifically state: (a) what information from the student’s records, previous reports, intake/initial meeting, etc. was used to guide the evaluation plan, (b) the purpose of each instrument selected, citing the manual and relevant theory/research as applicable, and (c) how referral questions will be addressed during the evaluation. Reports should be written up in sections as the case progresses. Students will be expected to submit their best work with each draft of the report (e.g., proofread, information complete to date) and to make revisions on subsequent drafts based on feedback received during supervision. Password protection is necessary on all documents submitted electronically, and students only should add identifying information (e.g., name) for the final report.

Supervision: Students are responsible for scheduling meetings with the course instructor for individual supervision outside of class time (see availability below). Students should arrange for meetings at the beginning of their case to review the assessment plan and as the case progresses. Students should be active participants in the supervision process. For each supervision session, it is expected that students submit work ahead of time to be reviewed (e.g., assessment plan, draft of report) and bring questions and topics for discussion. The instructor will return submitted work to students within one week; students should make revisions as soon as possible in order to complete assessments in a timely manner. Students are responsible for making sure that reports are submitted to the instructor far enough in advance of deadlines so that they complete all school-based assessments in accordance with school timelines. It is expected that students complete PEER cases within 3-4 weeks of the final testing session. More information about supervision expectations is provided in the PEER Manual.

Instructor office hours (by appointment only)

Mondays: 9 am – 1 pm
Wednesdays: 1 pm – 3 pm
Thursdays: 1 pm to 3 pm

Case Presentation: Students will select one completed case and show how the data from various sources contributed to the conceptualization and addressed the referral questions. The student will discuss the planning of the assessment battery, integration of data using various methods and sources, hypothesis testing, and application of models or theories. The student will present the completed case to the class (~15-20 minutes) and lead the class in relevant discussion (~5-10 minutes). Students should use a visual aid, such as PowerPoint slides or a handout, excluding identifying information to protect client confidentiality.

Evaluation

Course Requirement	Percent of Grade	Due Date
Class Participation and Topic Leadership	10%	Weekly
4 Completed Cases	80%	12/17
Case Presentation	10%	Varies

*If prior arrangements are made, deadline may be extended.

Total points possible: 100

90 – 100 = A, 80 – 89 = B, 70 – 79 = C, 60 – 69 = D, Below 60 = F

Assessment cases will be graded based on school supervisor evaluations and the following components of the assessment process evaluated by the instructor for each case. ***Please refer to the PEER Manual for additional information.***

- Advance planning for the case
- Preparation for supervision
- Follow up on feedback from supervision
- Timely completion of testing
- Timely completion of report write ups
- Relationship building with the child, teachers, family, etc.
- Accurate scoring of tests
- Scoring revisions made appropriately
- Adequate measures taken to protect client confidentiality (e.g., password protection)
- Professionalism (e.g., on time to meetings, responsive to requests, appropriate attire)
- Case conceptualization: seeking sufficient information and recognizing patterns
- Quality of first draft of report (e.g., self-editing)
- Quality of second/third draft of report (e.g., revisions made)
- Quality of final report
- Insight about self-development and flexibility
- Communication skills (e.g., keep supervisor informed, share difficulties early on)
- Preparation for and ease of test administration
- Preparation for feedback session
- Communication skills with parents
- Rapport building with child during testing (e.g., appropriate language/activities)

Additional Information & Expectations

Accommodations

If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please see the course instructor as soon as possible.

Religious Observation:

Students should inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances in advance.

Academic Integrity

In all class work and assignments, it is expected that students adhere to the highest personal and professional standards that reflect both the objectives of the University of Maryland and our professional ethics. Proper citations, paraphrasing, and quotations are essential in all work. Each student's work is expected to be consistent with the affirmation in our University's Code of Academic Integrity (*I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination/assignment*).

Confidentiality and Case Management

Students are expected to engage in ethical and professional behavior and adhere to the APA and NASP confidentiality and case management rules and policies. Proper informed consent must be obtained before engaging in assessment activities. All materials related to cases are to remain confidential. **Students must use the password provided by the instructor to encrypt all confidential documents before submitting them to the instructor.** It is the student's responsibility to protect confidential information by using initials and fake names whenever possible. Identifying information should be removed before circulating materials within the class.

Timely Completion of Assignments

Students are expected to complete assignments as specified by the due dates in the syllabus, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. Late assignments will not receive full credit unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. All assignments must be completed by the end of the semester in order to avoid a course grade reduction or receipt of a grade of "Incomplete." **Students are responsible for working with their school-based supervisors to ensure that evaluations are completed in accordance within the special education process timelines.** Due to the nature of the assessment process, cases not completed by the end of the semester may receive an extension if prior arrangements are made with the instructor.

Attendance

Regular attendance to class is required to successfully complete this course. In the unlikely event that a student becomes ill or must miss class on the day he/she is scheduled for assessment activities, the student should contact the instructor by phone and email as soon as possible. Students who miss class may be asked to complete additional assignments to make up for missed class time.

Course Materials and Readings

Required readings are listed on the Weekly Class. When possible, readings will be posted on Canvas throughout the semester. Students will need to access some of the textbooks through the UMD Library System or they may

wish to purchase books for future use. Additional required readings will be assigned by the instructor based on relevance to students' ongoing cases. Students will also assign readings based on their discussion topics.

Selected chapters from the following books:

- Weiss, L., Saklofske, D., Holdnack, J., & Prifitera, A. (2016). *WISC-V Assessment and Interpretation: Scientist-Practitioner Perspectives*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press. (available on www.lib.umd.edu)
- Mather, N., & Wendling, B. (2015). *Essentials of WJ IV Tests of Achievement Assessment*. New York: Wiley. (available on www.lib.umd.edu)
- Gutkin, T., & Reynolds, C. (Eds.). (2009). *The handbook of school psychology: Fourth edition*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. [SP Handbook]
- Harrison, P., & Thomas, A. (Eds.). (2014). *Best practices in school psychology: Data-based and collaborative decision making*. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists. [BP-V]
- Sattler, J.M (2008) *Assessment of children: Cognitive foundations* (5th ed.). San Diego, CA: Sattler Publisher.
- Sattler, J. M., & Hoge, R. D. (2006). *Assessment of children: Behavioral, social, and clinical foundations*. San Diego, CA: Sattler Publisher.
- Saklofske, D. H., Reynolds, C. R., & Schwann, V. L. (Eds.). (2013). *The Oxford handbook of child psychological assessment*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. [Oxford]
- Teglasi, H. (2010). *TAT and other storytelling assessment techniques* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.

Additional resources

- Manuals for selected test instruments are available through PEER and school sites.
- ICD10: The website for ICD10 CM is: <http://www.icd10data.com/>.
- DSM V: Available on Canvas and may be accessed through University of Maryland Research Port.

Weekly Class Schedule

On the following page is a list of dates and topics. Issues pertinent to ongoing assessment cases will be discussed so the specific topics are subject to change. Students will be assigned to PEER cases as intake interviews are scheduled.

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Date	Topics & Activities	Assignments/Readings
9/3	Course overview and review of procedures	- Background check for PG practicum
9/10	Review of procedures (continued) Preparing for Intake Interviews Report Writing--Background Section & Observations	- Meet with practicum supervisor and sign agreement - Read PEER Manual - Read Weiss et al. (2016), Ch. 12 - Read BP-V, Ch. 21
9/17	Intake: TBD WISC-V	- Review and practice WISC-V administration - Read Weiss et al. (2016), Ch. 1-3 - Read Oxford, Ch. 18
9/24	10 am: Intake #1 (JS) WJ-IV Tests of Achievement	- First record review completed (bring de-identified hard copy of background section to class) - Review and practice WJ-IV Ach - Mather & Wendling (2015), Ch. 2-3 - Read BP-V, Ch. 28
10/1	Testing Sessions Report Writing— Test Results and Interpretations	- Read SP Handbook, Ch. 11 - Read BP-V, Ch. 22 - Review DSM-V definitions for Intellectual Disability, Learning Disability, ADHD - Review IDEA definitions and PG's eligibility process for ID, SLD, ED, and OHI
10/8	Testing Sessions Report Writing--Test Results and Interpretations	- Read Weiss et al. (2016), Ch. 4 - Read Mather & Wendling (2015), Ch. 4 & 7 - Read Oxford, Ch. 14
10/15	Intake: TBD Report Writing--Recommendations	- Read BP-V, Ch. 24 - Read Sattler (2006), Ch. 10
10/22	Testing Sessions Communicating Assessment Results	TBA
10/29	Testing Sessions Discussion Topic (Student: _____)	TBA
11/5	Testing Sessions Discussion Topic (Student: _____)	TBA
11/12	Testing Sessions Discussion Topic (Student: _____)	TBA
11/19	Feedback Conferences	TBA
11/26	NO CLASS – Thanksgiving	TBA
12/3	Feedback Conferences Case Presentations	TBA
12/10	Case Presentations	
12/17	All assignments due	